

E. Lucas

No. [★]PR13A3.L8 1925



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THE GENTLEST ART
AND THE SECOND POST

OTHER WORKS BY E. V. LUCAS

ESSAYS

ZIGZAGS IN FRANCE
ENCOUNTERS AND DIVERSIONS
LUCK OF THE YEAR
GIVING AND RECEIVING
A BOSWELL OF BAGHDAD
'TWIXT EAGLE AND DOVE
THE PHANTOM JOURNAL
LOITERER'S HARVEST
CLOUD AND SILVER
ONE DAY AND ANOTHER
FIRESIDE AND SUNSHINE
CHARACTER AND COMEDY
OLD LAMPS FOR NEW
URBANITIES
SPECIALLY SELECTED

ANTHOLOGIES

THE CHARLES LAMB DAY-BOOK
THE OPEN ROAD
THE FRIENDLY TOWN
HER INFINITE VARIETY
GOOD COMPANY

BIOGRAPHY AND ART CRITICISM

A WANDERER AMONG PICTURES
THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB
THE LIFE AND WORK OF E. A. ABBEY
VERMEER OF DELFT
THE BRITISH SCHOOL
JOHN CONSTABLE, THE PAINTER
LITTLE BOOKS ON GREAT MASTERS :
1. MICHAEL ANGELO; 2. LEONARDO
DA VINCI; 3. REMBRANDT; 4. FRANS
HALS; 5. VAN DYCK; 6. CHARDIN
AND MADAME VIGÉE-LEBRUN; 7.
GIORGIONE; 8. VELASQUEZ.

STORIES

ADVISORY BEN
GENEVRA'S MONEY
ROSE AND ROSE
VERENA IN THE MIDST
THE VERMILION BOX
LANDMARKS
LISTENER'S LURE
MR. INGLESIDE
LONDON LAVENDER
OVER BEMERTON'S

TRAVEL

INTRODUCING LONDON
A WANDERER IN LONDON
LONDON REVISITED
A WANDERER IN PARIS
A WANDERER IN VENICE
A WANDERER IN HOLLAND
A WANDERER IN FLORENCE
HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN SUSSEX
ROVING EAST AND ROVING WEST

EDITIONS

MASTERFUL WILHELMINE
THE HAMBLETON MEN
THE BOOK OF THE QUEEN'S DOLLS'
HOUSE LIBRARY
THE POCKET EDITION OF THE WORKS
OF CHARLES LAMB: I. MISCEL-
LANEOUS PROSE; II. ELIA; III.
CHILDREN'S BOOKS; IV. POEMS
AND PLAYS; V. AND VI. LETTERS

DRAMA

THE SAME STAR

FOR CHILDREN

PLAYTIME AND COMPANY
A BOOK OF VERSES FOR CHILDREN
ANOTHER BOOK OF VERSES FOR CHILDREN
THREE HUNDRED GAMES AND PASTIMES
ANNE'S TERRIBLE GOOD NATURE
THE SLOWCOACH
THE FLAMP

THE GENTLEST ART AND THE SECOND POST

A CHOICE OF LETTERS
BY ENTERTAINING HANDS

EDITED BY

E. V. LUCAS

PRAY DO WRITE TO ME: A FEW LINES SOON ARE BETTER
THAN A THREE-DECKER A MONTH HENCE.

EDWARD FITZGERALD



METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

c
[1925]

*PR1343

L8

1925

First Issued in this Form in 1925

May 25, 1931

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2559a.218

add. cop.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

As keys do open chests,
So letters open breasts.

James Howell

THE EDITOR EXPLAINS

DEAR MADAM (OR SIR),—This collection does not attempt to be representative ; it does not compete, for example, with Mr. Mumby's two volumes. My aim was merely to bring together enough good letters to fill the book, and then to stop (although, as it happened, when the time came I rejected almost as many as I used). This places me in a strong position when (as you must frequently do) you throw up your hands and exclaim, "Why has he left out This—and That?" Sometimes the fault will lie with the law of copyright ; but probably quite as often it will be either because I had not read the letters by This and That, or because I did not care enough for them. Perhaps one day I will try again.

Believe me, yours faithfully,

E. V. LUCAS

THE GENTLEST ART

<i>First Published</i>	. . . . .	<i>October 1907</i>
<i>Second Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>December 1907</i>
<i>Third Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>January 1908</i>
<i>Fourth Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>February 1908</i>
<i>Fifth Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>August 1909</i>
<i>Sixth Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>December 1910</i>
<i>Seventh Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>May 1912</i>
<i>Eighth Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>January 1915</i>
<i>Ninth Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>April 1917</i>
<i>Tenth Edition</i>	<i>November 1918</i>
<i>Eleventh Edition</i>	<i>July 1920</i>
<i>Twelfth Edition</i>	<i>March 1923</i>

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THE GENTLEST ART

I




CHILDREN AND GRANDFATHERS

Marjorie Fleming writes her first letter









MY DEAR ISA,—I now sit down to answer all your kind and beloved letters which you was so good as to write to me. This is the first time I ever wrote a letter in my Life. There are a great many Girls in the Square and they cry just like a pig when we are under the painfull necessity of putting it to Death. Miss Potune a Lady of my acquaintance praises me dreadfully. I repeated something out of Dean Swift, and she said I was fit for the stage, and you may think I was primmed up with majestick Pride, but upon my word I felt myselfe turn a little birsay—birsay is a word which is a word that William composed which is as you may suppose a little enraged. This horrid fat simpliton says that my Aunt is beautifull which is intirely impossible for that is not her nature.

Two Edinburgh Reviewers

The Rev. Sydney Smith threatens his little granddaughter with awful penalties for omitting to stamp his letter properly   

OH, you little wretch ! your letter cost me fourpence. I will pull all the plums out of your puddings ; I will undress your dolls and steal their under petticoats ; you shall have no currant-jelly to your rice ; I will kiss you till you cannot see out of your eyes ; when nobody else whips you, I will do so ; I will fill you so full of sugar-plums that they shall run out of your nose and ears ; lastly, your frocks shall be so short that they shall not come below your knees. Your loving grandfather,
SYDNEY SMITH

Lord Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review* becomes very human      

(To a Grandchild)

CRAIGCROOK, *June 20, 1848*

MY SONS, NANCY !—I love you very much, and think very often of your dimples, and your pimples, and your funny little plays, and all your pretty ways ; and I send you my blessing, and wish I were kissing, your sweet rosy lips, or your fat finger-tips ; and that you were here, so that I could hear you stammering words, from a mouthful of curds ; and a great purple tongue (as broad as it's long) ; and see your round eyes, open wide with surprise, and your wondering look, to find yourself at Craigcrook ! To-morrow is Maggie's *birthday*, and we have built up a great bonfire in honour of it ; and Maggie Rutherford (do you remember her at all ?)

Frankie's Freckles

is coming out to dance round it ; and all the servants are to drink her health, and wish her many happy days with you and Frankie,—and all the mammays and pappys, whether grand or not grand. We are very glad to hear that she and you love each other so well, and are happy in making each other happy ; and that you do not forget dear Tarley or Frankie, when they are out of sight, nor Granny either,—or even old Granny pa, who is in most danger of being forgotten, he thinks. We have had showery weather here, but the garden is full of flowers ; and Frankie has a new wheel-barrow, and does a great deal of work, and *some mischief* now and then. All the dogs are very well ; and Foxey is mine, and Froggy is Tarley's, and Frankie has taken up with great white Neddy,—so that nothing is left for Granny but old barking Jacky and Dover when the carriage comes. The donkey sends his compliments to you, and maintains that you are a cousin of his ! or a near relation, at all events. He wishes, too, that you and Maggie would come ; for he thinks that you will not be so heavy on his back as Tarley and Maggie Rutherford, who now ride him without mercy.

This is Sunday, and Ali is at church—Granny and I taking care of Frankie till she comes back, and he is now hammering very busily at a corner of the carpet, which he says does not lie flat. He is very good, and really too pretty for a boy, though I think his two eyebrows are growing into one,—stretching and meeting each other above his nose ! But he has not so many *freckles* as Tarley, who has a very fine crop of them, which she and I encourage as much as we can. I hope you and Maggie will lay in a stock of them, as I think no little girl can be pretty without them in summer. Our pea-hens are suspected of having young families in some

“The Little Span-Long Elf”

hidden place, for though they pay us short visits now and then, we see them but seldom, and always alone. If you and Maggie were here with your sharp eyes, we think you might find out their secret, and introduce us to a nice new family of young peas. The old papa cock, in the meantime says he knows nothing about them, and does not care a farthing ! We envy you your young peas of another kind, for we have none yet, nor any asparagus neither, and hope you will bring some down to us in your lap. Tarley sends her love, and I send mine to you all ; though I shall think most of Maggie to-morrow morning, and of you when your birth morning comes. When is that do you know ? It is never dark now here, and we might all go to bed without candles. And so bless you ever and ever, my dear dimply pussie.—Your very loving

GRANDPA

John Keats is pleased to be an uncle



WINCHESTER, *September* [17], *Friday* [1819]

MY DEAR GEORGE,— . . . I admire the exact admeasurement of my niece in your mother's letter. O ! the little span-long elf. I am not the least a judge of the proper weight and size of an infant. Never trouble yourselves about that. She is sure to be a fine woman. Let her have only delicate nails both on hands and feet, and both as small as a May-fly's, who will live you his life on a 3 square inch of oak-leaf ; and nails she must have quite different from the market-women here, who plough into butter and make a quarter-pound taste of it.

I intend to write a letter to your wife, and there I may say more on this little plump subject—I hope she's

Dilke's Parental Mania

plump. "Still harping on my daughter!" This Winchester is a place tolerably well suited to me: there is a fine cathedral, a college, a Roman Catholic chapel, a Methodist do., an Independent do.; and there is not one loom or anything like manufacturing beyond bread and butter in the whole city.

There are a number of rich Catholics in the place. It is a respectable, ancient, aristocratic place, and moreover it contains a nunnery. Our set are by no means so hail fellow well met on literary subjects as we were wont to be. Reynolds has turn'd to the law. By the bye, he brought out a little piece at the Lyceum call'd *One, Two, Three, Four: by Advertisement*. It met with complete success. The meaning of this odd title is explained when I tell you the principal actor is a mimic, who takes off four of our best performers in the course of the farce. Our stage is loaded with mimics. I did not see the piece, being out of town the whole time it was in progress. Dilke is entirely swallowed up in his boy. 'Tis really lamentable to what a pitch he carries a sort of parental mania.

I had a letter from him at Shanklin. He went on a word or two about the Isle of Wight, which is a bit of [a] hobby horse of his, but he soon deviated to his boy. "I am sitting," says he, "at the window, expecting my boy from school." I suppose I told you somewhere that he lives in Westminster, and his boy goes to school there, where he gets beaten, and every bruise he has, and I daresay deserves, is very bitter to Dilke. The place I am speaking of puts me in mind of a circumstance which occurred lately at Dilke's. I think it very rich and dramatic and quite illustrative of the little quiet fun that he will enjoy sometimes.

First I must tell you that their house is at the corner

Mr. Lamb's Perplexity

of Great Smith Street, so that some of the windows look into one street, and the back windows into another round the corner.

Dilke had some old people to dinner—I know not who, but there were two old ladies among them. Brown was there—they had known him from a child.

Brown is very pleasant with old women, and on that day it seems behaved himself so winningly that they became hand and glove together, and a little complimentary.

Brown was obliged to depart early. He bid them good-bye and passed into the passage. No sooner was his back turned than the old women began lauding him.

When Brown had reached the street door, and was just going, Dilke threw up the window and call'd: "Brown! Brown! They say you look younger than ever you did." Brown went on, and had just turned the corner into the other street when Dilke appeared at the back window, crying: "Brown! Brown! By God, they say you're handsome!" You see what a many words it requires to give any identity to a thing I could have told you in half a minute. . . .

You have made an uncle of me, you have, and I don't know what to make of myself. I suppose next there'll be a nevey. You say in May last, write directly. I have not received your letter above ten days. The thought of your little girl puts me in mind of a thing I heard Mr. Lamb say. A child in arms was passing by his chair toward its mother, in the nurse's arms. Lamb took hold of the long clothes, saying: "Where, God bless me, where does it leave off?"

If you would prefer a joke or two to anything else, I have two for you, fresh hatched, just ris, as the bakers'

Adonais jokes

wives say of the rolls. The first I played off on Brown ; the second I played on myself. Brown, when he left me, "Keats," says he, "my good fellow" (staggering upon his left heel and fetching an irregular pirouette with his right) ; "Keats," says he (depressing his left eyebrow and elevating his right one), though by the way at the moment I did not know which was the right one ; "Keats," says he (still in the same posture, but furthermore both his hands in his waistcoat pockets and jutting out his stomach), "Keats,—my—go-o-ood fell-o-o-oo," says he (interlarding his exclamation with certain ventriloquial parentheses),—no, this is all a lie—he was as sober as a judge, when a judge happens to be sober, and said : "Keats, if any letters come for me, do not forward them, but open them and give me the marrow of them in a few words." At the time I wrote my first to him no letter had arrived. I thought I would invent one, and as I had not time to manufacture a long one, I dabbed off a short one, and that was the reason of the joke succeeding beyond my expectations. Brown let his house to a Mr. Benjamin—a Jew. Now, the water which furnishes the house is in a tank, sided with a composition of lime, and the lime impregnates the water unpleasantly.

Taking advantage of this circumstance, I pretended that Mr. Benjamin had written the following short note :—

"SIR,—By drinking your damn'd tank water I have got the gravel.

"What reparation can you make to me and my family?

"NATHAN BENJAMIN"

By a fortunate hit, I hit upon his right—heathen name—his right prenomén. Brown in consequence, it appears, wrote to the surprised Mr. Benjamin the following :—

The New Grandfather

"SIR,—I cannot offer you any remuneration until your gravel shall have formed itself into a stone—when I will cut you with pleasure.
C. BROWN"

This of Brown's Mr. Benjamin has answered, insisting on an explanation of this singular circumstance. B. says: "When I read your letter and his following, I roared; and in came Mr. Snook, who on reading them seemed likely to burst the hoops of his fat sides."

So the joke has told well. . . .

Shirley Brooks congratulates W. P. Frith, R.A., on arriving at the status of a grandfather, and adds counsel

"PUNCH" OFFICE, *November 21, 1865*

FRITH, EVEN GRANDFATHER FRITH,—With my whole soul do I congratulate thee and the Grandmama, and the venerable Aunt Sissy, and all the small uncles and infinitesimal aunts, or emmets. But chiefly I congratulate *thee*, O reverent and reverend, for the opportunity now afforded thee for the mending of thy ways. Henceforth we look for no frivolity from thee, no unseemly gibes and jests to which thou alone addest, "That's good," and echo is silent. Henceforth thou must study to live at peace with all men, as becomes white hairs, and let us hear no more when ——— announceth his "last exhibition," that thou didst hope it would begin at three minutes to eight a.m.; and be at Newgate. Truly this is a great chance for thee, O man of palettes, and aërial prospectives, and conscientious work, such as the *Athenæum* loves to indicate with the gesture called "taking a sight."

Learn psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, to

“L’art d’être grandpère”

be chanted unto thy Grandchild; and endeavour to obtain some knowledge of geography, etymology, tin-tacks, and prosody, that thou mayest not be put utterly to shame when the child shall demand information of thee.

Leave off smoking, yet keep a box for thy younger friends who are not Grandfathers.

Scoff not at architects, for where wouldst thou be but for houses? Nay, art not thou the founder of a house?

Look no longer at the ankles of the other sex, save in the way of thy calling, and speak no soft words unto the maidens, saying, “Lo, I adore thee,” when thou dost nothing of the kind. Abjure the society of low Bohemians like — and —, but cultivate the honest and virtuous, like Brooks, and, in so far as thou mayest, imitate him. Do not eat too much ham at breakfast, for temperance becometh the aged. Read few novels, but let those thou readest be of the best, as, *Broken to Harness*, *The Silver Cord*, *An Artist’s Proof*, and *Blount Tempest*. Likewise, begin to dress less jauntily, and wear a high waistcoat like the Right Reverend Bellew, and the Right Reverend Brooks’s.

When thou goest to the Academy dinner, avoid, so far as thou canst, the taking too much wine, for what thing is less dignified than a swipecy Grandfather?

Cherish these counsels in the apple of thine eye, and in the pineapple of thy rum; and be thankful that at a time of life when other young men may not ungracefully indulge in youthful levity, thou art called to a higher and a graver sphere.

Buy a stick, and practise walking with it, bending thy back, and not perking up elegantly when a comely female passeth by.

Have grave men to thy feasts, notably him who ex-

Sarah Ann Dunn

pecteth the interview with Mrs. Cottle, and to suffer as he never suffered before. So I greet thee, Grandfather, and hope that thou wilt have many grandsons and grand-daughters, and wilt ask me to the christening of them all. S. B.

A mother informs the Controller of the London
"Guild of Play" of the good it has done to
Sarah Ann ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

DERE AND HONERABLE MAAM,—I make so bold aster arsk if there can be a Guild of Play at every skule this winter, as I gets more work out of our Sarah Ann now she goes to that ther one of yours than ever I did afore. Her head's full of fairies, and sich like truck, but it makes her twice the gal she was, and she was anything but a hangel I kin tell yer, but if yer can turn er inside out like that with an hour a week I wishes as ow all the children could ave it too.—From yours obliging, MRS. DUNN

Thomas Hayley (aged twelve) points out defects in
William Cowper's translation of *Homer* ♪

EARTHAM, *March 4, 1793*

HONORED KING OF BARDS,—Since you deign to demand the observations of an humble and unexperienced servant of yours, on a work of one who is so much his superior (as he is ever ready to serve you with all his might) behold what you demand! but let me desire you not to censure me for my unskilful and perhaps (as they will undoubtedly appear to you) ridicu-

An Exacting Twelve-Year-Old

ious observations ; but be so kind as to receive them as a mark of respectful affection from your obedient servant,

THOMAS HAYLEY

Book. Line.

I. 184. I cannot reconcile myself to these expressions, "Ah, cloth'd with impudence, etc."; and 195, "Shameless wolf"; and 126, "Face of flint."

I. 508. "Dishonor'd foul," is, in my opinion, an uncleanly expression.

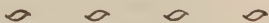
I. 651. "Reel'd," I think makes it appear as if Olympus was drunk.

I. 749. "Kindler of the fires in Heaven," I think makes Jupiter appear too much like a lamplighter.

II. 317-319. These lines are, in my opinion, below the elevated genius of Mr. Cowper.

XVIII. 300-304. This appears to me to be rather Irish, since in line 300 you say, "No one sat," and in 304, "Polydamas rose."

The Guilty Poet replies



WESTON, *March 14, 1793*

MY DEAR LITTLE CRITIC,—I thank you heartily for your observations, on which I set an higher value, because they have instructed me as much, and have entertained me more, than all the other strictures of our public judges in these matters. Perhaps I am not much more pleased with *shameless wolf, etc.*, than you. But what is to be done, my little man? Coarse

A Humble Poet

as the expressions are, they are no more than equivalent to those of Homer. The invective of the ancients was never tempered with good manners, as your papa can tell you ! and my business, you know, is not to be more polite than my author, but to represent him as closely as I can.

Dishonor'd foul I have wiped away, for the reason you give, which is a very just one, and the present reading is this—

Who had dared dishonor thus
The life itself, etc.

Your objection to *kindler of the fires of heaven*, I had the good fortune to anticipate, and expunged the dirty ambiguity some time since, wondering, not a little, that I had ever admitted it.

The fault you find with the two first verses of Nestor's speech, discovers such a degree of just discernment, that but for your papa's assurance to the contrary, I must have suspected *him* as the author of that remark : much as I should have respected it, if it had been so, I value it, I assure you, my little friend, still more as yours. In the new edition the passage will be found thus altered—

Alas ! great sorrow falls on Greece to-day,
Priam, and Priam's sons, with all in Troy.
Oh ! how will they exult, and in their hearts
Triumph, once hearing of this broil between
The prime of Greece, in council, and in arms.

Where the word *reel* suggests to you the idea of a drunken mountain, it performs the service to which I destined it. It is a bold metaphor ; but justified by one of the sublimest passages in Scripture, compared with the sublimity of which even that of Homer suffers humiliation.

“Olympus shall be tipsy”

It is God himself who, speaking, I think, by the prophet Isaiah, says—

“The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard.”

With equal boldness in the same scripture, the poetry of which was never equalled, mountains are said to skip, to break out into singing, and the fields to clap their hands. I intend, therefore, that my Olympus shall be tipsy.

The accuracy of your last remark, in which you convicted me of a bull, delights me. A fig for all critics but you! The blockheads could not find it. It shall stand thus—

First spake Polydamas—






Homer was more upon his guard than to commit such a blunder, for he says—

“ἥρχ’ ἀγορεύειν.”

And now, my dear little censor, once more accept my thanks. I only regret that your strictures are so few, being just and sensible as they are.

Tell your papa that he shall hear from me soon; accept mine, and my dear invalid’s affectionate remembrances.—Ever yours,

W. C.

Thomas Babington Macaulay (aged fourteen) keeps Mrs. Hannah More (aged seventy) informed of what is going on     

CLAPHAM, *January 16, 1815*

MY DEAR MADAM,—My mamma was on the point of writing to inform you that a supposed favourable alteration has taken place in Mr. Henry Thornton’s

The Poets in 1815

case. His physicians are still sanguine in their expectations ; but his friends, who examine his disorder by the rules of common sense, and not by those of medicine, are very weak in their hopes. The warm bath has been prescribed ; and it is the wish and prayer of all who know him that so excellent and valuable a character may be preserved to the world.

You will believe, my dear madam, that no one rejoices more than I do at your recovery from the effects of the fatal accident which threatened us. Events like these prove to us the strength of our affection for our friends,—shew the esteem in which great characters are held by the world.

We are eagerly expecting the promised essay, which will indeed be a most important addition to the literary history of the year eighteen hundred and fifteen, ample as that already is. Every eminent writer of poetry, good or bad, has been publishing within the last month, or is to publish shortly. Lord Byron's pen is at work over a poem as yet nameless. Lucien Buonaparte has given the world his *Charlemagne*. Scott has published his *Lord of the Isles*, in six cantos, a beautiful and elegant poem ; and Southey his *Roderick, the last of the Goths*. Wordsworth has printed *The Excursion* (a ponderous quarto of five hundred pages), "*being a portion of the intended poem entitled The Recluse.*" What the length of this intended poem is to be, as the Grand Vizier said of the Turkish poet, "N'est connu qu'à Dieu et à M. Wordsworth." This forerunner, however, is, to say no more, almost as long as it is dull ; not but that there are many striking and beautiful passages interspersed ; but who would wade through a poem




"—where, perhaps, one beauty shines
In the dry desert of a thousand lines?"

Poetry at every Meal

'To add to the list, my dear madam, you will soon see a work of mine in print. Do not be frightened ! it is only the index to the thirteenth volume of the *Christian Observer*, which I have had the honour of composing. Index-making, though the lowest, is not the most useless round in the ladder of literature ; and I pride myself upon being able to say that there are many readers of the *Christian Observer* who could do without Walter Scott's works, but not without those of, my dear Madam, your affectionate friend,

THOMAS B. MACAULAY

P.S.—Give my love to your sisters, if you please, and to my Aunt Thatcher, if still with you. My mamma has just now received her letter.

Hannah More informs Zachary Macaulay, Esq., of the
mental progress of his son   

BARLEY WOOD, *July 21, 1815 (?)*

MY DEAR SIR,—I wanted Tom to write to-day, but as he is likely to be much engaged with a favourite friend, and I shall have no time to-morrow, I scribble a line. This friend is a sensible youth at Woolwich : he is qualifying for the artillery. I overheard a debate between them on the comparative merits of Eugene and Marlborough as generals. The quantity of reading that Tom has poured in, and the quantity of writing he has poured out, is astonishing. It is in vain I have tried to make him subscribe to Sir Henry Savile's notion, that the poets are the best writers next to those who write prose. We have poetry for breakfast, dinner, and supper. He recited *all* "Palestine," while we breakfasted, to our pious friend Mr. Whalley, at my desire, and did it incomparably.

Young Shoulders

I was pleased with his delicacy in one thing. You know the Italian poets, like the French, too much indulge in the profane habit of attesting the Supreme Being ; but, without any hint from me, whenever he comes to the Sacred Name, he reverently passes it over. I sometimes fancy I observe a daily progress in the growth of his mental powers. His fine promise of mind expands more and more, and, what is extraordinary, he has as much accuracy in his expression as spirit and vivacity in his imagination. I like, too, that he takes a lively interest in all passing events, and that the *child* is still preserved ; I like to see him boyish as he is studious, and that he is as much amused with making a pat of butter as a poem. Though loquacious, he is very docile, and I don't remember a single instance in which he has persisted in doing anything when he saw we did not approve it. Several men of sense and learning have been struck with the union of gaiety and rationality in his conversation.

It was a pretty trait of him yesterday : being invited to dine abroad, he hesitated and then said, " No ; I have so few days that I will give them all to you." And he said to-day at dinner, when speaking of his journey, " I know not whether to think on my journey with most pain or pleasure—with most kindness for my friends, or affection for my parents." Sometimes we converse in ballad-rhymes, sometimes in Johnsonian sesquipedalians ; at tea, we condescend to riddles and charades. He rises early, and walks an hour or two before breakfast, generally composing verses. I encourage him to live much in the open air ; this, with great exercise on these airy summits, I hope, will invigorate his body ; though his frail body is sometimes tired, the spirits are never exhausted. He is, however, not sorry to be sent to bed soon after nine, and seldom stays to our supper.

A Long Parenthesis

A new poem is produced less incorrect than its predecessors—it is an excellent *satire* on radical reform, under the title of “Clodpole and the Quack Doctor.” It is really good. I am glad to see that they are thrown by as soon as they have been once read, and he thinks no more of them. He has very quick perceptions of the beautiful and defective in composition. I received your note last night, and Tom his humbling one. I tell him he is incorrigible in the way of tidiness. The other day, talking of what were the symptoms of a gentleman, he said, with some humour, and much *good*-humour, that he had certain infallible marks of one ; which were, neatness, love of cleanliness, and delicacy in his person. I know not when I have written so long a scrawl ; but I thought you and his good mother would feel an interest in any trifles which related to him. I hope it will please God to prosper his journey, and restore him in safety to you. Let us hear of his arrival.—Yours, my dear sir,
H. MORE

P.S.—To-morrow we go to Bristol.

Lewis Carroll writes to three of his little girl friends

I

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, *March 8, 1880*

MY DEAR ADA—(Isn't that your short name ?
“Adelaide” is all very well, but you see when one is *dreadfully* busy one hasn't time to write such long words—particularly when it takes one half-hour to remember how to spell it—and even then one has to go and get a dictionary to see if one has spelt it right, and of course the dictionary is in another room, at the top of

The Three Cats

a high bookcase—where it has been for months and months—and has got all covered with dust. So one has to get a duster first of all, and nearly choke oneself in dusting it—and when one *has* made out at last which is dictionary and which is dust, *even* then there is the job of remembering which end of the alphabet “A” comes—for one feels pretty certain it isn’t in the *middle*—then one has to go and wash one’s hands before turning over the leaves—for they’ve got so thick with dust, one hardly knows them by sight—and, as likely as not, the soap is lost, and the jug is empty, and there’s no towel, and one has to spend hours and hours in finding things—and perhaps after all, one has to go off to the shop to buy a new cake of soap. So, with all this bother, I hope you won’t mind my writing it short and saying, “My dear Ada”),—You said in your letter you would like a likeness of me : so here it is, and I hope you will like it. I won’t forget to call the next time but one I’m in Wallington. —Your very affectionate friend, LEWIS CARROLL

II

[No date]

MY DEAR AGNES,—You lazy thing ! What ? I’m to divide the kisses, am I ? Indeed I won’t take the trouble to do anything of the sort ! But I’ll tell *you* how to do it. First you must take *four* of the kisses, and—and that reminds me of a very curious thing that happened to me at half-past four yesterday. Three visitors came knocking at my door, begging me to let them in. And when I opened the door, who do you think they were ? You’ll never guess ; why, they were three cats ! Wasn’t it curious ? However, they all looked so cross and disagreeable that I took up the first

Drinking Health

thing I could lay my hand on (which happened to be the rolling-pin) and knocked them all down as flat as pancakes! "If *you* come knocking at *my* door," I said, "I shall come knocking at your heads." That was fair, wasn't it?—Yours affectionately, LEWIS CARROLL

III

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, *October 13, 1875*

MY DEAR GERTRUDE,—I never give birthday *presents*, but you see I *do* sometimes write a birthday *letter*: so as I've just arrived here, I am writing this to wish you many and many a happy return of your birthday to-morrow. I will drink your health if only I can remember, and if you don't mind—but perhaps you object?

You see, if I were to sit by you at breakfast, and to drink your tea, you wouldn't like that, would you? You would say, "Boo! hoo! Here's Mr. Dodgson drunk all my tea, and I haven't got any left!" So I am very much afraid, next time Sybil looks for you, she'll find you sitting by the sad sea-waves and crying "Boo! hoo! Here's Mr. Dodgson has drunk my health, and I haven't got any left!"

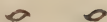
And how it will puzzle Mr. Maund, when he is sent for to see you! "My dear madam, I'm sorry to say your little girl has got no health at all! I never saw such a thing in my life!" "You see she would go and make friends with a strange gentleman, and yesterday he drank her health!" "Well, Mrs. Chataway," he will say, "the only way to cure her is to wait till his next birthday, and then for *her* to drink *his* health."

And then we shall have changed healths. I wonder how you'll like mine! Oh, Gertrude, I wish you would not talk such nonsense! . . . Your loving friend,

LEWIS CARROLL

“That she-Aristotle Mary”

Charles Lamb entertains a poet's son



P.M. November 25, 1819

DEAR MISS WORDSWORTH,—You will think me negligent, but I wanted to see more of Willy, before I ventured to express a prediction. Till yesterday I had barely seen him—*Virgilium Tantum Vidi*—but yesterday he gave us his small company to a bullock's heart—and I can pronounce him a lad of promise. He is no pedant nor bookworm, so far I can answer. Perhaps he has hitherto paid too little attention to other men's inventions, preferring, like Lord Foppington, the “natural sprouts of his own.” But he has observation, and seems thoroughly awake. I am ill at remembering other people's bon mots, but the following are a few. Being taken over Waterloo Bridge, he remarked that if we had no mountains, we had a fine river at least, which was a Touch of the Comparative, but then he added, in a strain which augured less for his future abilities as a Political Economist, that he supposed they must take at least a pound a week Toll. Like a curious naturalist he inquired if the tide did not come up a little *salty*. This being satisfactorily answered, he put another question as to the flux and reflux, which being rather cunningly evaded than artfully solved by that she-Aristotle Mary, who muttered something about its getting up an hour sooner and sooner every day, he sagely replied, “Then it must come to the same thing at last,” which was a speech worthy of an infant Halley! The Lion in the 'Change by no means came up to his ideal standard. So impossible it is for Nature in any of her works to come up to the standard of a child's imagination. The whelps (Lionets) he was sorry to find were dead, and on particular inquiry his old friend the Ouran Outang had gone the way of all

“I cannot hit that beast”

flesh also. The grand Tiger was also sick, and expected in no short time to exchange this transitory world for another—or none. But again, there was a Golden Eagle (I do not mean that of Charing) which did much *arride* and console him. William's genius, I take it, leans a little to the figurative, for being at play at Tricktrack (a kind of minor Billiard-table which we keep for smaller wights, and sometimes refresh our own mature fatigues with taking a hand at), not being able to hit a ball he had iterate aimed at, he cried out, “I cannot hit that beast.” Now the balls are usually called men, but he felicitously hit upon a middle term, a term of approximation and imaginative reconciliation, a something where the two ends, of the brute matter (ivory) and their human and rather violent personification into *men*, might meet, as I take it, illustrative of that Excellent remark in a certain Preface about Imagination, explaining “like a sea-beast that had crawled forth to sun himself.” Not that I accuse William Minor of hereditary plagiary, or conceive the image to have come *ex traduce*. Rather he seemeth to keep aloof from any source of imitation, and purposely to remain ignorant of what mighty poets have done in this kind before him. For, being asked if his father had ever been on Westminster Bridge, he answer'd that he did not know.

It is hard to discern the Oak in the Acorn, or a Temple like St. Paul's in the first stone which is laid, nor can I quite prefigure what destination the genius of William Minor hath to take. Some few hints I have set down, to guide my future observations. He hath the power of calculation in no ordinary degree for a chit. He combineth figures, after the first boggle, rapidly. As in the Tricktrack board, where the hits are figured, at first he did not perceive that 15 and 7 made 22, but by a little

A Lake Poet's Son

use he could combine 8 with 25—and 33 again with 16, which approacheth something in kind (far let me be from flattering him by saying in degree) to that of the famous American boy. I am sometimes inclined to think I perceive the future satirist in him, for he hath a sub-sardonic smile which bursteth out upon occasion, as when he was asked if London were as big as Ambleside, and indeed no other answer was given, or proper to be given, to so ensnaring and provoking a question. In the contour of scull certainly I discern something paternal. But whether in all respects the future man shall transcend his father's fame, Time, the trier of geniuses, must decide. Be it pronounced peremptorily at present, that Willy is a well-manner'd child, and though no great student, hath yet a lively eye for things that lie before him. Given in haste from my desk at Leadenhall. Your's and yours' most sincerely,
C. LAMB

Shelley visits Allegra in the convent o o o

(To Mrs. Shelley)

RAVENNA, *August 15, 1821*

I WENT the other day to see Allegra at her convent, and stayed with her about three hours. She is grown tall and slight for her age, and her face is somewhat altered. The traits **have** become more delicate, and she is much paler, probably from the effect of improper food. She yet retains the beauty of her deep blue eyes and of her mouth, but she has a contemplative seriousness which, mixed with her excessive vivacity, which has not yet deserted her, has a very peculiar effect in a child. She is under very strict discipline, as may be observed

Another Poet's Daughter

from the immediate obedience she accords to the will of her attendants. This seems contrary to her nature, but I do not think it has been obtained at the expense of much severity. Her hair, scarcely darker than it was, is beautifully profuse, and hangs in large curls on her neck. She was prettily dressed in white muslin, and an apron of black silk, with trousers. Her light and airy figure and her graceful motions were a striking contrast to the other children there. She seemed a thing of a finer and a higher order. At first she was very shy, but after a little caressing, and especially after I had given her a gold chain which I had bought at Ravenna for her, she grew more familiar, and led me all over the garden, and all over the convent, running and skipping so fast that I could hardly keep up with her. She showed me her little bed, and the chair where she sat at dinner, and the carozzina in which she and her favourite companions drew each other along a walk in the garden. I had brought her a basket of sweetmeats, and before eating any of them she gave her companions and each of the nuns a portion. This is not much like the old Allegra. I asked her what I should say from her to her mamma, and she said :

“Che mi manda un bacio e un bel vestituro.”

“E come vuoi il vestituro sia fatto?”

“Tutto di seta e d'oro,” was her reply.

Her predominant foible seems the love of distinction and vanity, and this is a plant which produces good or evil, according to the gardener's skill. I then asked her what I should say to papa? “Che venga farmi un visitino e che porta seco la *mamma*.” Before I went away she made me run all over the convent, like a mad thing. The nuns, who were half in bed, were ordered to hide themselves and on returning Allegra began ringing the

Allegra's *Scappature*

bell which calls the nuns to assemble. The tocsin of the convent sounded, and it required all the efforts of the Prioress to prevent the spouses of God from rendering themselves, dressed or undressed, to the accustomed signal. Nobody scolded her for these *scappature*, so I suppose she is well treated, so far as temper is concerned. Her intellect is not much cultivated. She knows certain *orazioni* by heart, and talks and dreams of Paradiso and all sorts of things, and has a prodigious list of saints, and is always talking of the Bambino. This will do her no harm, but the idea of bringing up so sweet a creature in the midst of such trash till sixteen!

II

THE NEWS BEARERS

Charles Dickens employs the pen of Boswell

(To Wilkie Collins)

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER

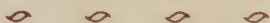
Friday Evening, May 24, 1861

MY DEAR WILKIE,—I am delighted to receive so good an account of last night, and have no doubt that it was a thorough success. Now it is over, I may honestly say that I am glad you were (by your friendship) forced into the Innings, for there is no doubt that it is of immense importance to a public man in our way to have his wits at his tongue's end. Sir (as Dr. Johnson would have said), if it be not irrational in a man to count his feathered bipeds before they are hatched, we will conjointly astonish them next year. *Boswell*: Sir, I hardly understand you. *Johnson*: Sir, you never understand anything. *Boswell* (in a sprightly manner): Perhaps, Sir, I am all the better for it. *Johnson* (savagely): Sir, I do not know but that you are. There is Lord Carlisle (smiling); he never understands anything, and yet the dog's well enough. Then, Sir, there is Forster; he understands

Swift in Town

many things, and yet the fellow is fretful. Again, Sir, there is Dickens, with a facile way with him—like Davy, Sir, like Davy—yet I am told that the man is lying at a hedge ale-house by the sea-shore in Kent, as long as they will trust him. *Boswell*: But there are no hedges by the sea in Kent, Sir. *Johnson*: And why not, Sir? *Boswell* (at a loss): I don't know, Sir, unless—*Johnson* (thundering): Let us have no unlessees, Sir. If your father had never said "unless," he would never have begotten you, Sir. *Boswell* (yielding): Sir, that is very true.

The Dean tells Stella all



October 14, 1710

IS that tobacco at the top of the paper, or what? I do not remember I slobbered. Lord, I dreamed of Stella, etc., so confusedly last night, and that we saw Dean Bolton and Sterne go into a shop; and she bid me call [them] to her, and they proved to be two parsons I knew not; and I walked without till she was shifting, and such stuff, mixed with much melancholy and uneasiness, and things not as they should be, and I know not how: and it is now an ugly gloomy morning.—*At night*. Mr. Addison and I dined with Ned Southwell, and walked in the Park; and at the Coffeehouse I found a letter from the Bishop of Clogher, and a packet from MD. I opened the bishop's letter; but put up MD.'s and visited a lady just come to town, and am now got into bed, and going to open your little letter: and God send I may find MD. well, and happy, and merry, and that they love Presto as they do fires. O, I will not open it yet! yes I will! no I will not! I am going; I cannot stay till I turn over: what shall I do? My fingers itch: and I now have it in my left hand; and now I will open it

“Directed to Mr. Addison”

this very moment. I have just got it, and am cracking the seal, and cannot imagine what is in it ; I fear only some letter from a bishop, and it comes too late : I shall employ nobody's credit but my own. Well, I see though—Pshaw, it is from Sir Andrew Fountaine : what, another ! I fancy that is from Mrs. Barton ; she told me she would write to me ; but she writes a better hand than this : I wish you would inquire ; it must be at Dawson's office at the Castle. I fear this is from Patty Rolt, by the scrawl. Well, I will read MD.'s letter. Ah no ; it is from poor Lady Berkeley, to invite me to Berkeley Castle this winter ; and now it grieves my heart : she says she hopes my lord is in a fair way of recovery : poor lady. Well, now I go to MD.'s letter : faith, it is all right ; I hoped it was wrong. Your letter, N. 3, that I have now received, is dated Sep. 26, and Manley's letter, that I had five days ago, was dated Oct. 3, that is a fortnight's difference : I doubt it has lain in Steele's office, and he forgot. Well, there is an end of that : he is turned out of his place ; and you must desire those who send me packets, to enclose them in a paper, directed to Mr. Addison, at St. James' Coffehouse : not common letters, but packets : the Bishop of Clogher may mention it to the Archbishop when he sees him. As for your letter, it makes me mad : flidikins, I have been the best boy in Christendom, and you come with your two eggs a-penny.—Well : but stay, I will look over my book : adad, I think there was a chasm between my N. 2 and N. 3. Faith, I will not promise to write to you every week ; but I will write every night, and when it is full I will send it ; that will be once in ten days, and that will be often enough ; and if you only begin to take up the way of writing to Presto, only because it is Tuesday, [or Monday bedad, it will grow a task ; but write when you have a mind—no, no, no, no, no, no, no,

“To dine at Mr. Harley’s”

no,—agad, agad, agad, agad, agad; no poor Stellakins. Slids, I would the horse were in your—chamber. Have I not ordered Parvisol to obey your directions about him? and have not I said in my former letters, that you may pickle him, and boil him if you will? What do you trouble me about your horses for? Have I anything to do with them! Revolutions a hindrance to me in my business; revolutions—to me in my business? if it were not for the revolutions I could do nothing at all; and now I have all hopes possible, though one is certain of nothing; but to-morrow I am to have an answer, and am promised an effectual one. I suppose I have said enough in this and a former letter how I stand with new people; ten times better than ever I did with the old; forty times more caressed. I am to dine to-morrow at Mr. Harley’s; and if he continues as he has begun, no man has ever been better treated by another.

What you say about Stella’s mother, I have spoken enough to it already. I believe she is not in town, for I have not yet seen her. My lampoon is cried up to the skies; but nobody suspects me for it, except Sir Andrew Fountaine; at least they say nothing of it to me. Did I not tell you of a great man who received me very coldly? that is he, but say nothing; it was only a little revenge: I will remember to bring it over. The Bishop of Clogher has smoked my *Tatler*, about shortening of words, etc. But, God so! etc.

Charles Dickens narrates a dream ♪ ♪ ♪

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *September 1, 1843*

MY DEAR FELTON,—If I thought it in the nature of things that you and I could ever agree on paper, touching a certain Chuzzlewitian question where-

“Imaginary Butchers and Bakers”

upon Forster tells me you have remarks to make, I should immediately walk into the same, tooth and nail. But as I don't, I won't. Contenting myself with the prediction, that one of these years and days, you will write or say to me: “My dear Dickens, you were right, though rough, and did a world of good, though you got most thoroughly hated for it.” To which I shall reply: “My dear Felton, I looked a long way off and not immediately under my nose.” . . . At which sentiment you will laugh, and I shall laugh; and then (for I foresee this will all happen in my land) we shall call for another pot of porter and two or three dozens of oysters.

Now, don't you in your own heart and soul quarrel with me for this long silence?

Not half so much as I quarrel with myself, I know; but if you could read half the letters I write to you in imagination, you would swear by me for the best of correspondents. The truth is, that when I have done my morning's work, down goes my pen, and from that minute I feel it a positive impossibility to take it up again, until imaginary butchers and bakers wave me to my desk. I walk about brimful of letters, facetious descriptions, touching morsels, and pathetic friendships, but can't for the soul of me uncork myself. The post-office is my rock ahead. My average number of letters that *must* be written every day is, at the least, a dozen. And you could no more know what I was writing to you spiritually, from the perusal of the bodily thirteenth, than you could tell from my hat what was going on in my head, or could read my heart on the surface of my flannel waistcoat.

This is a little fishing place; intensely quiet; built on a cliff, whereon—in the centre of a tiny semi-circular bay—our house stands; the sea rolling and dashing under the windows. Seven miles out are the Goodwin Sands

Boz Day by Day

(you've heard of the Goodwin Sands?) whence floating lights perpetually wink after dark, as if they were carrying on intrigues with the servants. Also there is a big lighthouse called the North Foreland on a hill behind the village, a severe parsonic light, which reproves the young and giddy floaters, and stares grimly out upon the sea. Under the cliff are rare good sands, where all the children assemble every morning and throw up impossible fortifications, which the sea throws down again at high water. Old gentlemen and ancient ladies flirt after their own manner in two reading-rooms and on a great many scattered seats in the open air.

Other old gentlemen look all day through telescopes and never see anything. In a bay-window in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with rather long hair and no neck-cloth, who writes and grins as if he thought he were very funny indeed. His name is Boz. At one he disappears, and presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen—a kind of salmon-coloured porpoise—splashing about in the ocean. After that he may be seen in another bay-window on the ground floor, eating a strong lunch; after that, walking a dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He's as brown as a berry, and they *do* say is a small fortune to the innkeeper who sells beer and cold punch. But this is mere rumour. Sometimes he goes up to London (eighty miles, or so, away), and then I'm told there is a sound in Lincoln's Inn Fields at night, as of men laughing, together with a clinking of knives and forks and wine glasses.

I never shall have been so near you since we parted aboard the *George Washington* as next Tuesday. Forster,

Maclise and Longfellow

Maclise, and I, and perhaps Stanfield, are then going aboard the Cunard steamer at Liverpool, to bid Macready good-bye and bring his wife away. It will be a very hard parting. You will see and know him, of course. We gave him a splendid dinner last Saturday at Richmond, whereat I presided with my accustomed grace. He is one of the noblest fellows in the world, and I would give a great deal that you and I should sit beside each other to see him play *Virginus*, *Lear*, or *Werner*, which I take to be, every way, the greatest piece of exquisite perfection that his lofty art is capable of attaining. His *Macbeth*, especially the last act, is a tremendous reality ; but so indeed is almost everything he does. You recollect, perhaps, that he was the guardian of our children while we were away. I love him dearly. . . . You asked me, long ago, about Maclise. He is such a wayward fellow in his subjects, that it would be next to impossible to write such an article as you were thinking of about him. I wish you could form an idea of his genius. One of these days a book will come out, *Moore's Irish Melodies*, entirely illustrated by him, on every page. When it comes, I'll send it to you. You will have some notion of him then.

He is in great favour with the Queen, and paints secret pictures for her to put upon her husband's table on the morning of his birthday, and the like. But if he has a care, he will leave his mark on more enduring things than palace walls.

And so Longfellow is married. I remember *her* well, and could draw her portrait, in words, to the life. A very beautiful and gentle creature, and a proper love for a poet. My cordial remembrances and congratulations. Do they live in the house where we breakfasted? . . .

I very often dream I am in America again ; but,

Christened with a Toasting-Fork






strange to say, I never dream of you. I am always endeavouring to get home in disguise, and have a dreary sense of distance. *À propos* of dreams, is it not a strange thing if writers of fiction never dream of their own creations; recollecting, I suppose, even in their dreams, that they have no real existence? I never dream of any of my own characters, and I feel it so impossible that I would wager, Scott never did of his, real as they are. I had a good piece of absurdity in my head a night or two ago. I dreamed that somebody was dead. I don't know who, but it's not to the purpose. It was a private gentleman, or a particular friend; and I was greatly overcome when the news was broken to me (very delicately) by a gentleman in a cocked hat, top boots, and a sheet. Nothing else. "Good God!" I said, "is he dead?" "He is as dead, sir," rejoined the gentleman, "as a door-nail. But we must all die, Mr. Dickens, sooner or later, my dear sir." "Ah!" I said, "Yes, to be sure. Very true. But what did he die of?" The gentleman burst into a flood of tears, and said in a voice broken by emotion: "He christened his youngest child, Sir, with a toasting fork." I never in my life was so affected as at his having fallen a victim to this complaint. It carried a conviction to my mind that he never could have recovered. I knew that it was the most interesting and fatal malady in the world; and I wrung the gentleman's hand in a convulsion of respectful admiration, for I felt that this explanation did equal honour to his head and heart.

What do you think of Mrs. Gamp? And how do you like the undertaker? I have a fancy that they are in your way. Oh heaven! such green woods as I was rambling among, down in Yorkshire, when I was getting that done last July! For days and weeks we never saw

Midnight Frolics

the sky but through green boughs ; and all day long I cantered over such soft moss and turf, that the horse's feet scarcely made a sound upon it. We have some friends in that part of the country (close to Castle Howard, where Lord Morpeth's father dwells in state, *in* his park indeed), who are the jolliest of the jolly, keeping a big old country house, with an ale-cellar something larger than a reasonable church, and everything, like Goldsmith's bear, dances "in a concatenation accordingly." Just the place for you, Felton !

We performed some madnesses there in the way of forfeits, picnics, rustic games, inspections of ancient monasteries at midnight, when the moon was shining, that would have gone to your heart, and, as Mr. Weller says, "come out on the other side." . . . Write soon, my dear Felton ; and if I write to you less often than I would, believe that my affectionate heart is with you always. Love and regards to all friends, from yours ever and ever, very faithfully yours.

Thackeray describes his Parisian adventures to Mrs.
Brookfield     

I WENT to see my old haunts when I came to Paris 13 years ago, and made believe to be a painter,—just after I was ruined and before I fell in love and took to marriage and writing. It was a very jolly time, I was as poor as Job and sketched away most abominably, but pretty contented ; and we used to meet in each other's little rooms and talk about art and smoke pipes and drink bad brandy and water—That awful habit still remains, but where is art, that dear mistress whom I loved, though in a very indolent, capricious manner, but with a real

The Venus of Milo

sincerity? I see her far, very far off. I jilted her, I know it very well ; but you see it was Fate ordained *that* marriage should never take place ; and forced me to take on with another lady, two other ladies, three other ladies ; I mean the three and my wife, etc., etc.


Well, you are very good to listen to all this egotistic prattle, *chère Sœur*, *si douce et si bonne*.

I have no reason to be ashamed of my loves, seeing that all three are quite lawful. Did you go to see my people yesterday? Some day when his reverence is away, will you have the children? And not, if you please, be so vain as to fancy that you can't amuse them or that they will be bored in your home. They must and shall be fond of you, if you please. Alfred's open mouth as he looked at the broken bottle and spilt wine must have been a grand picture of agony. I couldn't find the lecture room at the Institute, so I went to the Louvre instead, and took a feast with the statues and pictures. The Venus de Milo is the grandest figure of figures. The wave of the lines of the figure, whenever seen, fills my senses with pleasure. What is it which so charms, satisfies one, in certain lines? O! the man who achieved that statue was a beautiful Genius. I have been sitting thinking of it these 10 minutes in a delighted sensuous rumination. The colours of the Titian pictures comfort one's eyes similarly ; and after these feasts, which wouldn't please my lady very much, I daresay, being, I should think, too earthly for you, I went and looked at a picture I usedn't to care much for in old days, an angel saluting a Virgin and Child by Pietro Cortona,—a sweet smiling angel with a lily in her hands, looking so tender and gentle I wished that instant to make a copy of it, and do it beautifully, which I can't, and present it to somebody on Lady-day. There now, just fancy it is

“Pray God keep us simple”

done, and presented in a neat compliment, and hung up in your room—a pretty piece—dainty and devotional?—I drove about with ——, and wondered at her more and more. —She is come to “my dearest William” now : though she doesn’t care a fig for me. She told me astonishing things, showed me a letter in which every word was true, and which was a fib from beginning to end ;—a Miracle of Deception ;—flattered, fondled and coaxed—O ! she was worth coming to Paris for !

Pray God keep us simple. I have never looked at anything in my life which has so amazed me. Why, this is as good almost as if I had you to talk to. Let us go out and have another walk.

Horace Walpole describes Madame du Deffand 

(To George Montagu, Esq.)

PARIS, *September 7, 1769*

MY dear old friend [Madame du Deffand] was charmed with your mention of her, and made me vow to return you a thousand compliments. She cannot conceive why you will not step hither—feeling in herself no difference between the spirits of twenty-three and seventy-three, she thinks there is no impediment to doing whatever one will, but the want of eyesight. If she had that I am persuaded no consideration would prevent her making me a visit at Strawberry Hill. She makes songs, sings them, remembers all that ever were made ; and, having lived from the most agreeable to the most reasoning age, has all that was amiable in the last, all that is sensible in this, without the vanity of the former, or the pedant impertinence of the latter. I have

Madame du Deffand

heard her dispute with all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, and never knew her in the wrong. She humbles the learned, sets right their disciples, and finds conversation for everybody. Affectionate as Madame de Sévigné, she has none of her prejudices, but a more universal taste ; and, with the most delicate frame, her spirits hurry her through a life of fatigue that would kill me, if I was to continue here. If we return by one in the morning from suppers in the country, she proposes driving to the Boulevard, or to the Foire St. Ovide, because it is too early to go to bed. I had great difficulty last night to persuade her, though she was not well, not to sit up till between two and three for the Comet ; for which purpose she had appointed an astronomer to bring his telescopes to the President Henault's, as she thought it would amuse me. In short, her goodness to me is so excessive, that I feel unashamed at producing my withered person in a round of diversions, which I have quitted at home. I tell a story : I do feel ashamed, and sigh to be in my quiet castle and cottage ; but it costs me many a pang, when I reflect that I shall probably never have resolution enough to take another journey to see this best and sincerest of friends, who loves me as much as my mother did ! but it is idle to look forward—what is next year ?—a bubble that may burst for her or me, before even the flying year can hurry to the end of its almanack !

To form plans and projects in such a precarious life as this, resembles the enchanted castles of fairy legends, in which every gate was guarded by giants, dragons, etc. Death or diseases bar every portal through which we mean to pass ; and, though we may escape them and reach the last chamber, what a wild adventurer is he that centres his hopes at the end of such an avenue ! I sit contented with the beggars at the threshold, and never pro-

Diverting the Angels

pose going on, but as the gates open of themselves. The weather here is quite sultry, and I am sorry to say, one can send to the corner of the street and buy better peaches than all *our* expense in kitchen gardens produces. Lord and Lady Dacre are a few doors from me, having started from Tunbridge more suddenly than I did from Strawberry Hill, but on a more unpleasant motive. My lord was persuaded to come and try a new physician. His faith is greater than mine! but, poor man! can one wonder that he is willing to believe? My lady has stood her shock, and I do not doubt will get over it.

Adieu, my t'other dear old friend! I am sorry to say, I see you almost as seldom as I do Madame du Deffand. However it is comfortable to reflect that we have not changed to each other for some five-and-thirty years, and neither you nor I haggle about naming so ancient a term. I made a visit yesterday to the Abbess of Panthemont, General Ogelthorpe's niece, and no chicken. I inquired after her mother, Madame de Mezières, and thought I might, to a spiritual votary to immortality, venture to say that her mother must be very old; she interrupted me tartly, and said, no, her mother had been married extremely young. Do but think of it seeming important to a saint to sink a wrinkle of her own through an iron grate! Oh! we are ridiculous animals; and if angels have any fun in them, how we must divert them.

Charles Lamb sends news to China ♪ ♪ ♪

January 2, 1810

Mary sends her love.

DEAR MANNING,—When I last wrote to you, I was in lodgings. I am now in chambers, No. 4, Inner Temple Lane, where I should be happy to see you any

Lamb in the Temple

evening. Bring any of your friends, the Mandarins, with you. I have two sitting-rooms : I call them so *par excellence*, for you may stand, or loll, or lean, or try any posture in them ; but they are best for sitting ; not squatting down Japanese fashion, but the more decorous use of the posteriors which European usage has consecrated. I have two of these rooms on the third floor, and five sleeping, cooking, etc., rooms, on the fourth floor. In my best room is a choice collection of the works of Hogarth, an English painter of some humour. In my next best are shelves containing a small but well-chosen library. My best room commands a court, in which there are trees and a pump, the water of which is excellent—cold with brandy, and not very insipid without. Here I hope to set up my rest, and not quit till Mr. Powell, the undertaker, gives me notice that I may have possession of my last lodging. He lets lodgings for single gentlemen. I sent you a parcel of books by my last, to give you some idea of the state of European literature. There comes with this two volumes, done up as letters, of minor poetry, a sequel to *Mrs. Leicester* ; the best you may suppose mine ; the next best are my coadjutor's ; you may amuse yourself in guessing them out ; but I must tell you mine are but one-third in quantity of the whole. So much for a very delicate subject. It is hard to speak of one's self, etc. Holcroft had finished his life when I wrote to you, and Hazlitt has since finished his life—I do not mean his own life, but he has finished a life of Holcroft, which is going to press. Tuthill is Dr. Tuthill. I continue Mr. Lamb. I have published a little book for children on titles of honour : and to give them some idea of the difference of rank and gradual rising, I have made a little scale, supposing myself to receive the following

Degrees of Honour

various accessions of dignity from the king, who is the fountain of honour—As at first, 1, Mr. C. Lamb ; 2, C. Lamb, Esq. ; 3, Sir C. Lamb, Bart. ; 4, Baron Lamb of Stamford ;¹ 5, Viscount Lamb ; 6, Earl Lamb ; 7, Marquis Lamb ; 8, Duke Lamb. It would look like quibbling to carry it on further, and especially as it is not necessary for children to go beyond the ordinary titles of sub-regal dignity in our own country, otherwise I have sometimes in my dreams imagined myself still advancing, as 9th, King Lamb ; 10th, Emperor Lamb ; 11th, Pope Innocent, higher than which is nothing but the Lamb of God. Puns I have not made many (nor punch much), since the date of my last ; one I cannot help relating. A constable in Salisbury Cathedral was telling me that eight people dined at the top of the spire of the cathedral ; upon which I remarked, that they must be very sharp-set. But in general I cultivate the reasoning part of my mind more than the imaginative. Do you know Kate * * * * *. I am stuffed out so with eating turkey for dinner, and another turkey for supper yesterday (turkey in Europe and turkey in Asia), that I can't jog on. It is New-Year here. That is, it was New-Year half a-year back, when I was writing this. Nothing puzzles me more than time and space, and yet nothing puzzles me less, for I never think about them. The Persian ambassador is the principal thing talked of now. I sent some people to see him worship the sun on Primrose Hill at half past six in the morning, 28th November ; but he did not come, which makes me think the old fire-worshippers are a sect almost extinct in Persia. Have you trampled on the Cross

¹ Where my family come from. I have chosen that if ever I should have my choice.

Jew, Gentleman, and Angel

yet? The Persian ambassador's name is Shaw Ali Mirza. The common people call him Shaw Nonsense. While I think of it, I have put three letters besides my own three into the Indian post for you, from your brother, sister, and some gentleman whose name I forget. Will they, have they, did they, come safe? The distance you are at, cuts up tenses by the root. I think you said you did not know Kate * * * * *. I express her by nine stars, though she is but one, but if ever one star differed from another in glory —. You must have seen her at her father's. Try and remember her. Coleridge is bringing out a paper in weekly numbers, called the *Friend*, which I would send, if I could ; but the difficulty I had in getting the packets of books out to you before deters me ; and you'll want something new to read when you come home. It is chiefly intended to puff off Wordsworth's poetry ; but there are some noble things in it by the by. Except Kate, I have had no vision of excellence this year, and she passed by like the queen on her coronation day ; you don't know whether you saw her or not. Kate is fifteen : I go about moping, and sing the old pathetic ballad I used to like in my youth—

"She's sweet Fifteen,
I'm *one year more*."

Mrs. Bland sung it in boy's clothes the first time I heard it. I sometimes think the lower notes in my voice are like Mrs. Bland's. That glorious singer Braham, one of my lights, is fled. He was for a season. He was a rare composition of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel, yet all these elements mixed up so kindly in him, that you could not tell which predominated ; but he is gone, and one Phillips is engaged instead. Kate






Jokes and Friends

is vanished, but Miss B * * * * * is always to be met with !

“Queens drop away, while blue-legg'd Maukin thrives;
And courtly Mildred dies, while country Madge survives.”

That is not my poetry, but Quarles's ; but haven't you observed that the rarest things are the least obvious? Don't show anybody the names in this letter. I write confidentially, and wish this letter to be considered as *private*. Hazlitt has written a *grammar* for Godwin ; Godwin sells it bound up with a treatise of his own on language, but the *grey mare is the better horse*. I don't allude to Mrs. Godwin, but to the word *grammar*, which comes near to *grey mare*, if you observe, in sound. That figure is called paronomasia in Greek. I am sometimes happy in it. An old woman begged of me for charity. “Ah ! sir,” said she, “I have seen better days ;” “So have I, good woman,” I replied ; but I meant literally, days not so rainy and overcast as that on which she begged : she meant more prosperous days. Dr. Dawe is made associate of the Royal Academy. By what law of association I can't guess. Mrs. Holcroft, Miss Holcroft, Mr. and Mrs. Godwin, Mr. and Mrs. Hazlitt, Mrs. Martin and Louisa, Mrs. Lum, Capt. Burney, Mrs. Burney, Martin Burney, Mr. Rickman, Mrs. Rickman, Dr. Stoddart, William Dollin, Mr. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Norris, Mr. Fenwick, Mrs. Fenwick, Miss Fenwick, a man that saw you at our house one day, and a lady that heard me speak of you ; Mrs. Buffam that heard Hazlitt mention you, Dr. Tuthill, Mrs. Tuthill, Colonel Harwood, Mrs. Harwood, Mr. Collier, Mrs. Collier, Mr. Sutton, Nurse, Mr. Fell, Mrs. Fell, Mr. Marshall, are very well, and occasionally inquire after you.

Boz and the Wizard

Charles Dickens chronicles the proceedings of four
Eton boys     

BROADSTAIRS, KENT, *July 11, 1851*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,—I am so desperately indignant with you for writing me that short apology for a note, and pretending to suppose that under any circumstances I could fail to read with interest anything *you* wrote to me, that I have more than half a mind to inflict a regular letter upon you. If I were not the gentlest of men I should do it!

Poor dear Haldimand, I have thought of him so often. That kind of decay is so inexpressibly affecting and piteous to me, that I have no words to express my compassion and sorrow. When I was at Abbotsford, I saw in a vile glass case the last clothes Scott wore. Among them an old white hat, which seemed to be tumbled and bent and broken by the uneasy, purposeless wandering, hither and thither, of his heavy head. It so embodied Lockhart's pathetic description of him when he tried to write, and laid down his pen and cried, that it associated itself in my mind with broken powers and mental weakness from that hour. I fancy Haldimand in such another, going listlessly about that beautiful place, and remembering the happy hours we have passed with him, and his goodness and truth, I think what a dream we live in, until it seems for the moment the saddest dream that ever was dreamed. Pray tell us if you hear more of him. We really loved him.

To go to the opposite side of life, let me tell you that a week or so ago I took Charley and three of his schoolfellows down the river gipsying. I secured the services of Charley's godfather (an old friend of mine, and a noble fellow with boys), and went down to Slough,

“Mahogany”

accompanied by two immense hampers from Fortnum and Mason, on (I believe) the wettest morning ever seen out of the tropics.

It cleared before we got to Slough ; but the boys, who had got up at four (we being due at eleven), had horrible misgivings that we might not come, in consequence of which we saw them looking into the carriages before us, all face. They seemed to have no bodies whatever, but to be all face; their countenances lengthened to that surprising extent. When they saw us the faces shut up as if they were upon strong springs, and their waistcoats developed themselves in the usual places. When the first hamper came out of the luggage-van, I was conscious of their dancing behind the guard ; when the second came out with bottles in it, they all stood wildly on one leg. We then got a couple of flies to drive to the boat-house. I put them in the first, but they couldn't sit still a moment, and were perpetually flying up and down like the toy figures in the sham snuff-boxes. In this order we went on to “Tom Brown's, the tailor's,” where they all dressed in aquatic costume, and then to the boat-house, where they all cried in shrill chorus for “Mahogany”—a gentleman so called by reason of his sunburnt complexion, a waterman by profession. (He was likewise called during the day “Hog” and “Hogany,” and seemed to be unconscious of any proper name whatsoever.) We embarked, the sun shining now, in a galley with a striped awning, which I had ordered for the purpose, and all rowing hard, went down the river. We dined in a field ; what I suffered for fear those boys should get drunk, the struggles I underwent in a contest of feeling between hospitality and prudence, must ever remain untold. I feel, even now, old with the anxiety of that tremendous hour. They were very good, however.

Very Wet Wet-Bobs

The speech of one became thick, and his eyes too like lobsters' to be comfortable, but only temporarily. He recovered and I suppose outlived the salad he took. I have heard nothing to the contrary, and I imagine I should have been implicated in the inquest if there had been one. We had tea and rashers of bacon at a public-house, and came home, the last five or six miles in a prodigious thunder-storm. This was the great success of the day, which they certainly enjoyed more than anything else. The dinner had been great, and Mahogany had informed them, after a bottle of light champagne, that he never would come up the river "with ginger company" any more. But the getting so completely wet through was the culminating part of the entertainment. You never in your life saw such objects as they were; and their perfect unconsciousness that it was at all advisable to go home and change, or that there was anything to prevent their standing at the station two mortal hours to see me off, was wonderful. As to getting them to their dames with any sort of sense that they were damp, I abandoned the idea. I thought it a success when they went down the street as civilly as if they were just up and newly dressed, though they really looked as if you could have rubbed them to rags with a touch, like saturated curl-paper.

I am sorry you have not been able to see our play, which I suppose you won't now, for I take it you are not going on Monday, the twenty-first, our last night in town? It is worth seeing, not for the getting up (which modesty forbids me to approve), but for the little bijou it is, in the scenery, dresses and appointments.

They are such as never can be got together again, because such men as Stanfield, Roberts, Grieve, Haghe, Egg and others never can be again combined in such

Strayed Little Revellers

a work. Everything has been done at its best from all sorts of authorities, and it is really very beautiful to look at.

I find I am "used up" by the Exhibition. I don't say "there is nothing in it"—there's too much. I have only been twice; so many things bewildered me. I have a natural horror of sights, and the fusion of so many sights in one has not decreased it.

I am not sure that I have seen anything but the fountain and perhaps the Amazon. It is a dreadful thing to be obliged to be false, but when anyone says, "Have you seen ——?" I say "Yes," because if I don't, I know he'll explain it, and I can't bear that. —— took all the school one day. The school was composed of a hundred "infants," who got among the horses' legs in crossing to the main entrance from the Kensington Gate, and came reeling out from between the wheels of coaches undisturbed in mind. They were clinging to horses, I am told, all over the park. When they were collected and added up by the frantic monitors, they were all right. They were then regaled with cake, etc., and went tottering and staring all over the place; the greater part wetting their forefingers and drawing a wavy pattern on every accessible object. One infant strayed. He was not missed. Ninety and nine were taken home, supposed to be the whole collection, but this particular infant went to Hammersmith. He was found by the police at night, going round and round the turnpike, which he still supposed to be a part of the Exhibition. He had the same opinion of the police, also of Hammersmith workhouse, where he passed the night. When his mother came for him in the morning, he asked when it would be over? It was a great Exhibition, he said, but he thought it long.

Combe Florey *en fête*

As I begin to have a foreboding that you will think the same of this act of vengeance of mine, this present letter, I shall make an end of it with my heartiest and most loving remembrances to Watson. I would have liked him of all things to have been in the Eton expedition, tell him, and to have heard a song (by-the-bye, I have forgotten that) sung in the thunder-storm, solos by Charley, chorus by the friends, describing the career of a booby who was plucked at College, every verse ending—

“I don’t care a fig what the people may think,
But what WILL the governor say!”

which was shouted with a deferential jollity towards myself, as a governor who had that day done a creditable action, and proved himself worthy of all confidence.—
Ever, dear Mrs. Watson, most sincerely yours.

The Rev. Sydney Smith tells Mrs. Grote everything

COMBE FLOREY, *December 20, 1840*

I AM improved in lumbago, but still less upright than Aristides. Our house is full of beef, beer, young children, newspapers, libels, and mince-pies, and life goes on very well, except that I am often reminded I am too near the end of it. I have been trying —’s *Lectures on the French Revolution*, which I could not get on with, and am reading Thiers, which I find it difficult to lay down. — is long and feeble; and though you are tolerably sure he will be dull, you are not equally sure he will be right. We are covered with snow, but utterly ignorant of what cold is, as are all natural philosophers.


A Threat of Baronets

What a remarkable woman she must be, that Mrs. Grote! she uses the word "*thereto*." Why use antiquated forms of expression? Why not wear antiquated caps and shoes? Of all women living, you least want these distinctions.

I join you sincerely in your praise of —; she is beautiful, she is clear of envy, hatred, and malice, she is very clear of prejudices, she has a regard for me.

It will be a great baronet season,—a year of the Bloody Hand. I know three more baronets I can introduce you to, and four or five knights; but, I take it, the mock-turtle of knights will not go down. I see how it will end: Grote will be made a baronet; and if he is not, I will. The Ministers, who would not make me a bishop, can't refuse to make me a baronet. I remain always your attached friend,

SYDNEY SMITH

Horace Walpole keeps George Montagu informed 

ARLINGTON STREET, *December 16, 1764*

AS I have not read in the paper that you died lately at Greatworth, in Northamptonshire, nor have met with any Montagu or Trevor in mourning, I conclude you are living; I send this, however, to inquire, and, if you should happen to be departed, hope your executor will be so kind as to burn it.

Though you do not seem to have the same curiosity about my existence, you may gather from my handwriting that I am still in being; which being perhaps full as much as you want to know of me, I will trouble you with no further particulars about myself—nay, nor about anybody else: your curiosity seeming to be pretty much the same

The State of the Town

about all the world. News there are certainly none, nobody is even dead, as the Bishop of Carlisle [Lyttleton] told me to-day, which I repeat to you in general, though I apprehend in his own mind he meant no possessor of a better bishopric.

If you like to know the state of the town, here it is. In the first place, it is very empty ; in the next, there are more diversions than the week will hold. A charming Italian opera, with no dances and no company, at least on Tuesdays ; to supply which defects the subscribers are to have a ball and supper—a plan that in my humble opinion will [fill] the Tuesdays and empty the Saturdays. At both playhouses are woful English operas, which, however, fill better than the Italian, patriotism being entirely confined to our ears ; how long the sages of the law may leave us those I cannot say. Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack's, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin ; but Almack's room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers, as easily as Moses' rod gobbled down those of the magicians.

Well, but there are more joys ; a dinner and assembly every Tuesday at the Austrian Minister's ; ditto on Thursdays at the Spaniard's ; ditto on Wednesdays and Sundays at the French Ambassador's ; besides Madame de Welderen's on Wednesdays, Lady Harrington's Sundays, and occasional private mobs at my Lady Northumberland's. Then for the mornings, there are levees and drawing-rooms without end. Not to mention the Maccaroni Club ; which has quite absorbed Arthur's ; for you know old fools will hobble after young ones. Of all these pleasures I prescribe myself a very small pittance,—my dark corner in my own box at the Opera.

Walpole Forlorn

and now and then an ambassador, to keep my French going till my journey to Paris. Politics are gone to sleep, like a paroli at pharaoh, though there is the finest tract lately published that was ever written, called an "*Inquiry into the Doctrine of Libels*." It would warm your old Algernon blood ; but for what anybody cares, might as well have been written about the wars of York and Lancaster.

The thing most in fashion, is my edition of Lord Herbert's Life ; people are mad after it, I believe because only 200 were printed ; and, by the numbers that admire it, I am convinced that if I had kept his lordship's counsel, very few would have found out the absurdity of it.

The caution with which I hinted at its extravagance has passed with several for approbation, and drawn in theirs. This is nothing new to me ; it is when one laughs out at their idols, that one angers people. I do not wonder now that Sir Philip Sidney was the darling hero, when Lord Herbert, who followed him so close, and trod in his steps, is at this time of day within an ace of rivalling him. I wish I had let him ; it was contradicting one of my own maxims, which I hold to be very just ; that it is idle to endeavour to cure the world of any folly, unless we could cure it of being foolish.

Tell me whether I am likely to see you before I go to Paris, which will be early in February. I hate you for being so indifferent about me. I live in the world, yet love nothing ; care a straw for nothing but two or three old friends that I have loved these 30 years. You have buried yourself with half a dozen parsons and squires, and yet never cast a thought upon those you have always lived with.

E. F-G. takes a New Pen

You come to town for two months, grow tired in six weeks, hurry away, and then one hears no more of you till next winter. I don't want you to like the world; I like it no more than you; but I stay a while in it, because while one sees it one laughs at it, but when one gives it up, one grows angry with it; and I hold it much wiser to laugh than to be out of humour. You cannot imagine how much ill-blood this perseverance has cured me of; I used to say to myself: "Lord! this person is so bad, that person is so bad. I hate them." I have now found out that they are all pretty much alike, and I hate nobody. Having never found you out, but for integrity and sincerity, I am much disposed to persist in a friendship with you; but if I am to be at all the pains of keeping it up, I shall imitate my neighbours (I don't mean those at next door, but in the Scripture sense of neighbour, anybody) and say, "That is a very good man, but I don't care a farthing for him." Till I have taken my final resolution on that head, I am yours most cordially.

Edward FitzGerald reports progress ♪ ♪ ♪

MARKET HILL, WOODBRIDGE

October 1866

MY DEAR POLLOCK,—(You *shall* have a new Pen), I suppose your Country Rambles are over, and that you are got back to the old Shop. Well then, let me hear of you, do. I can't forget your kindly accosting of me in Holborn in the Spring, when I was after Carpets, etc. Well, I fitted up two rooms in my new House (there are only three) and got it ready for a sick Niece, who was there for two months.

Sophocles a Sort of Craze

But I have not got into it ; but go on here : after living some forty years in lodgings, one is frightened at a Change : yet it would be better to go.

Meanwhile, here I am.

For nearly four months I was living on board my Big Ship. Bed as well as Board. She was only laid up in her Mud a week ago ; and here I am returned to mine. Laurence called on me (he was at my Brother's) just before I had bid Adieu to my Seafaring ; so I didn't see him.

Please to send me Spedding's new Address ; he won't, however, be obliged to you for doing so, I believe ; but I must have the Old Villain out of his Cart twice a Year at least.

I want you to send me your "Carte de Visite" : you said you would three or four years ago, but you have not done so. Can't you send me a good one of Spedding ? He wouldn't, for all I could say to him. I daresay you have several of him : do send me one : and not the worst : and one of yourself, Do. I have written to Blakesley for his ; as also to tell him that his *Herodotus* seems to me the very best Edition of a classic that ever came into my hands. I scarce know why it is that I always get back to Greek (and Virgil)—when in my Ship : but so it is. Sophocles has been a sort of Craze to me this Summer.

(N.B.—Don't be frightened. No Translation threatened ! All that done with for ever.) And *Herodotus* has been delightful. Now, I turn again to Mudie. *Armada* have you read ? Absurd as it is, so near being very good, I only wish it were a dozen Volumes instead of Two. It is time to read again the *Woman in White* : a Masterpiece in its way I do think. I guessed at Annie Thackeray's new Novel in the *Cornhill* ; so much of

“Now could I drink hot—Grog”

her Father: so much of Herself: I think she begins to deal rather too much in Reflections; but her Pictures are delightful: her Children the best I ever read.

’Tis now the very witching Time of night, etc. Now could I drink hot—Grog—and so I will. When I was in my Ship I could smoke and drink—Punch, even—but I shall soon have to give up, now I am laid up.

My Paper is in mourning, for my Brother Peter’s Wife: a Capital Woman, who died five months ago.

He really loved her, was like a Ship without rudder when he lost her, and has in consequence just married his Housekeeper.

I believe he has done well.

Now do write to me; and send me your Photograph, as also the Monster’s.

Robert Louis Stevenson sets down a day’s work at
Apia ∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ ∩

(To Sidney Colvin)

IN THE MOUNTAIN, APIA, SAMOA
Tuesday, November 3, 1890

I BEGIN to see the whole scheme of letter-writing; you sit down every day and pour out an equable stream of twaddle.

This morning all my fears were fled, and all the trouble had fallen to the lot of Peni himself, who deserved it; my field was full of weeders; and I am again able to justify the ways of God. All morning I worked at the

The Path up the Vaituliga

South Seas, and finished the chapter I had stuck upon on Saturday. Fanny, awfully hove-to with rheumatics and injuries received upon the field of sport and glory, chasing pigs, was unable to go up and down stairs, so she sat upon the back verandah, and my work was chequered by her cries. "Paul, you take a spade to do that—dig a hole first. If you do that, you'll cut your foot off! Here, you boy, what do you there? You no get work? You go find Simelé; he give you work. Peni, you tell this boy he go find Simelé; suppose Simelé no give him work, you tell him go 'way. I no want him here. That boy no good."—*Peni* (from the distance in reassuring tones), "All right, sir!"—*Fanny* (after a long pause), "Peni, you tell that boy go find Simelé. I no want him stand here all day. I no pay that boy. I see him all day. He no do nothing." Luncheon, beef, soda-scones, fried bananas, pine-apple in claret, coffee. Try to write a poem; no go. Play the flageolet. Then sneakingly off to farming and pioneering. Four gangs at work on our place; a lively scene; axes crashing and smoke blowing; all the knives are out. But I rob the garden party of one without a stock, and you should see my hand—cut to ribbons. Now I want to do my path up the Vaituliga single-handed, and I want it to burst on the public complete. Hence, with devilish ingenuity, I begin it at different places; so that if you stumble on one section, you may not even then suspect the fulness of my labours. Accordingly, I started in a new place, below the wire, and hoping to work up to it. It was perhaps lucky I had so bad a cutlass, and my smarting hand bid me stay before I had got up to the wire, but just in season, so that I was only the better of my activity, not dead beat as yesterday.

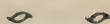
In a South-Sea Forest

A strange business it was, and infinitely solitary ; away above, the sun was in the high tree-tops ; the lianas noosed and sought to hang me ; the saplings struggled, and came up with that sob of death that one gets to know so well ; great, soft, sappy trees fell at a lick of the cutlass, little tough switches laughed at and dared my best endeavour. Soon, toiling down in that pit of verdure, I heard blows on the far side, and then laughter. I confess a chill settled on my heart. Being so dead alone, in a place where by rights none should be beyond me, I was aware, upon interrogation, if those blows had drawn nearer, I should (of course quite unaffectedly) have executed a strategic movement to the rear ; and only the other day I was lamenting my insensibility to superstition ! Am I beginning to be sucked in ? Shall I become a midnight twitterer like my neighbours ? At times I thought the blows were echoes ; at times I thought the laughter was from birds. For our birds are strangely human in their calls. Vaea mountain about sundown sometimes rings with shrill cries, like the hails of merry, scattered children. As a matter of fact, I believe stealthy wood-cutters from Tanugamanono were above me in the wood and answerable for the blows ; as for the laughter, a woman and two children had come and asked Fanny's leave to go up shrimp-fishing in the burn ; beyond doubt, it was these I heard. Just at the right time I returned ; to wash down, change, and begin this snatch of letter before dinner was ready, and to finish it afterwards, before Henry has yet put in an appearance for his lesson in " long explessions."

Dinner : stewed beef and potatoes, baked bananas, new loaf-bread hot from the oven, pine-apple in claret. These are great days ; we have been low in the past ; but now are we as belly-gods, enjoying all things.

Lady Augusta Stanley

Thomas Carlyle meets Queen Victoria



(To Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries)

CHELSEA, *March* 11, 1869

DEAR JEAN,— . . . "Interview" took place this day gone a week; nearly a week before that, the Dean and Deaness (who is called Lady Augusta Stanley, once *Bruce*, an active hand and busy little woman) drove up here in a solemnly mysterious, though half quizzical manner, invited me for Thursday, 4th, 5 p.m.:—must come, a very "high or indeed highest person has long been desirous," etc. etc. I saw well enough it was the Queen incognita; and briefly agreed to come. "Half-past 4 COME *you*!" and then went their ways.

Walking up at the set time, I was then ushered into a long drawing-room in their monastic edifice. I found no Stanley there; only at the farther end, a tall old Gear-pole¹ of a Mrs. Grote,—the most wooden woman I know in London or the world, who thinks herself very clever, etc.,—the sight of whom taught me to expect others; as accordingly, in a few minutes, fell out. Grote and wife, Sir Charles Lyell and ditto, Browning and myself, were I saw to be our party. "Better than bargain! These will take the edge off the thing, if edge it have!"—which it hadn't, nor threatened to have.

The Stanleys and we were all in a flow of talk, and some flunkies had done setting coffee-pots, tea-cups of sublime patterns, when Her Majesty, punctual to a minute, glided softly in, escorted by her Dame in Waiting (a Dowager Duchess of Athol) and by the Princess Louise, decidedly a very pretty young lady, and *clever* too, as I found in speaking to her afterwards.

¹ Irish weaver implement.

Queen Victoria

The Queen came softly forward, a kindly little smile on her face ; gently shook hands with all three women, gently acknowledged with a nod the silent deep bow of us male monsters ; and directly in her presence everybody was as if at ease again. She is a comely little lady with a pair of kind, clear, and intelligent grey eyes ; still looks plump and almost young (in spite of one broad wrinkle that shows in each cheek *occasionally*) ; has a fine low voice ; soft indeed her whole manner is and melodiously perfect ; it is impossible to imagine a *politer* little woman—nothing the least imperious ; all gentle, all *sincere*-looking ; unembarrassing, rather attractive even ;—*makes* you feel too (if you have sense in you) that she is Queen.

After, a little word to each of us in succession as we stood, —to me it was, "Sorry you did not see my Daughter," Princess of Prussia (or, "she sorry," perhaps?) which led us into Potsdam, Berlin, etc., for an instant or two ; to Sir Charles Lyell I heard her say, "Gold in Sutherland," but quickly and delicately cut him *short* in responding ; to Browning, "Are you writing anything?" (he has just been publishing the absurdest of things!); to Grote I did not hear what she said ; but it was touch and go with everybody ; Majesty visibly *without* interest or nearly so of her *own*.

This done, coffee (very black and muddy) was handed round ; Queen and three women taking seats in opposite corners, Mrs. Grote in a chair *intrusively close* to Majesty, Lady Lyell modestly at the *diagonal* corner ; we others obliged to stand, and hover within call. Coffee fairly done, Lady Augusta called me gently to "Come and speak with Her Majesty." I obeyed, first asking, as an old and infirmish man, Majesty's permission to *sit*, which was graciously conceded. Nothing of the least significance was said, nor *needed* ; however, my bit of

The Philosopher Escapes






dialogue went very well. "What part of Scotland I came from?" "Dumfries-shire (where Majesty might as well go some time) ; Carlisle, *i.e.* *Caer-Lewal*, a place about the antiquity of King Solomon (according to Milton, whereat Majesty smiled) ; Border-Ballads (and even old Jamie Pool slightly alluded to,—not by name !) ; Glasgow, and even Grandfather's ride thither,—ending in mere *psalms*, and streets *vacant* at half-past nine p.m. ;—hard sound and genuine Presbyterian *root* of what has now shot up to be such a monstrous ugly cabbage-tree and Hemlock-tree !" all which Her Majesty seemed to take rather well.

Whereupon Mrs. Groterose, and good naturedly brought forward her Husband to her own chair, *cheek by jowl* with Her Majesty, who evidently did not care a straw for him, but kindly asked "Writing anything?" and one heard "Aristotle, now that I have done with Plato," etc., etc.—but only for a minimum of time. Majesty herself (I think apropos of some question of my *shaking hand*) said something about her own difficulty in writing by dictation, which brought forward Lady Lyell and husband, naturally used to the operation—after which, talk becoming trivial, Majesty gracefully retired,—Lady Augusta with her,—and in ten minutes more, returned to receive our farewell bows ; which, too, she did very prettily ; and sailed out as if moving on skates, and bending her head towards us with a smile. By the Underground Railway I was home before seven, and out of the adventure, with only a headache of little moment.

Froude tells me there are foolish *myths* about the poor business, especially about my share of it, but this is the real truth ;—*worth* to me, in strict speech, all but nothing ; the *myths* even less than nothing. . . .

T. CARLYLE

A Questionable Model

Mary Guilhermin, 1766, instructs children in the art
of letter-writing     

DEAR PAPA,—Yesterday, after an agreeable walk of half-a-mile to our parish church, I was inspired with a truly unaffected zeal to join in that well composed form of prayer contained in our Church liturgy, expressed in so audible, so solemn, so easy an elocution, so emphatic, without the least tincture of pedantry, that the divine proved to his congregation he was sensible that he was addressing the Supreme Being, which dispenses happiness to mankind, and inspired everyone with a real fervency to join in prayer and thanksgiving to our Creator. When he mounted the pulpit, his grave deportment drew the attention of old and young. His subject, on the reciprocal duties between parents and children, warmed one with a lively gratitude for your kind nurture of me from tender infancy till now. Every duty he mentioned that is required from the parent I was persuaded you had performed in regard to me, and upon examination, finding myself too often deficient in my past, have resolved to amend past errors, and by a uniform good behaviour prove myself to be your

GRATEFUL AND FAITHFUL SON

III

THE FAMILIAR MANNER

Miss Austen tells all the news



I

STEVENTON, *Tuesday, December 1798*

MY DEAR CASSANDRA,—Your letter came quite as soon as I expected, and so your letters will always do, because I have made it a rule not to expect them till they come, in which I think I consult the ease of us both.

It is a great satisfaction to us to hear that your business is in a way to be settled, and so settled as to give you as little inconvenience as possible. You are very welcome to my father's name and to his services if they are ever required in it. I shall keep my ten pounds too, to wrap myself up in next winter.

I took the liberty a few days ago of asking your black velvet bonnet to lend me its cawl, which it very readily did, and by which I have been enabled to give a considerable improvement of dignity to cap, which was before too *nidgetty* to please me. I shall wear it on

Miss Austen's Bonnet

Thursday, but I hope you will not be offended with me for following your advice as to its ornaments only in part. I still venture to retain the narrow silver round it, put twice round without any bow, and instead of the black military feather shall put in the coquelicot one as being smarter, and besides coquelicot is to be all the fashion this winter. After the ball I shall probably make it entirely black.

I am sorry that our dear Charles begins to feel the dignity of ill-usage. My father will write to Admiral Gambier. He must have already received so much satisfaction from his acquaintance and patronage of Frank, that he will be delighted, I dare say, to have another of the family introduced to him. I think it would be very right in Charles to address Sir Thomas on the occasion, though I cannot approve of *your* scheme of writing to him (which you communicated to me a few nights ago) to request him to come here and convey you to Steventon. To do you justice, however, you had some doubts of the propriety of such a measure yourself.

I am very much obliged to my dear little George for his message—for his *love* at least; his *duty*, I suppose, was only in consequence of some hints of my favourable intentions towards him from his father or mother. I am sincerely rejoiced, however, that I ever was born, since it has been the means of procuring him a dish of tea. Give my best love to him.

This morning has been made very gay to us by visits from our two lively neighbours, Mr. Holder and Mr. John Harwood.

I have received a very civil note from Mrs. Martin, requesting my name as a subscriber to her Library, which opens January 14, and my name, or rather yours, is accordingly given. My mother finds the money. May

Mrs. Powlett gives Satisfaction

subscribes too, which I am glad of, but hardly expected. As an inducement to subscribe, Mrs. Martin tells me that her collection is not to consist only of novels, but of every kind of literature, etc. She might have spared this pretension to *our* family, who are great novel-readers and not ashamed of being so ; but it was necessary, I suppose, to the self-consequence of half her subscribers.

I hope and imagine that Edward Taylor is to inherit all Sir Edward Dering's fortune as well as all his own father's. I took care to tell Mrs. Lefroy of your calling on her mother, and she seemed pleased with it.

I enjoyed the hard black frosts of last week very much, and one day while they lasted walked to Deane by myself. I do not know that I ever did such a thing in my life before.

Charles Powlett has been very ill, but is getting well again. His wife is discovered to be everything that the neighbourhood could wish her, silly and cross as well as extravagant.

Earle Harwood and his friend Mr. Bailey came to Deane yesterday, but are not to stay above a day or two. Earle has got the appointment to a prison ship at Portsmouth, which he has been for some time desirous of having, and he and his wife are to live on board for the future.

We dine now at half-past three, and have done dinner, I suppose, before you begin. We drink tea at half-past six. I am afraid you will despise us. My father reads Cowper to us in the morning, to which I listen when I can. How do you spend your evenings? I guess that Elizabeth works, that you read to her, and that Edward goes to sleep. My mother continues hearty ; her appetite and nights are very good, but she complains of an asthma, a dropsy, water in her chest, and a liver disorder.

The third Miss Irish Lefroy is going to be married to

James Digweed's Accident

a Mr. Courteney, but whether James or Charles I do not know. Miss Lyford is gone into Suffolk with her brother and Miss Lodge. Everybody is now busy in making up an income for the two latter. Miss Lodge has only 800*l.* of her own, and it is not supposed that her father can give her much; therefore the good offices of the neighbourhood will be highly acceptable. John Lyford means to take pupils.

James Digweed has had a very ugly cut—how could it happen? It happened by a young horse which he had lately purchased, and which he was trying to back into its stable; the animal kicked him down with his fore feet, and kicked a great hole on his head; he scrambled away as soon as he could, but was stunned for a time, and suffered a good deal of pain afterwards. Yesterday he got upon the horse again, and, for fear of something worse, was forced to throw himself off.

Wednesday.—I have changed my mind, and changed the trimmings of my cap this morning: they are now such as you suggested. I felt as if I should not prosper if I strayed from your directions, and I think it makes me look more like Lady Conyngham now than it did before, which is all that one lives for now. I believe I *shall* make my new gown like my robe, but the back of the latter is all in a piece with the tail, and will seven yards enable me to copy it in that respect?

Mary went to church on Sunday, and had the weather been smiling, we should have seen her before this time. Perhaps I may stay at Manydown as long as Monday, but not longer. Martha sends me word that she is too busy to write to me now, and but for your letter I should have supposed her deep in the study of medicine preparatory to their removal from Ibthorp. The letter to Gambier goes to-day.

Miss Austen's Magnificent Project

I expect a very stupid ball ; there will be nobody worth dancing with, and nobody worth talking to but Catherine, for I believe Mrs. Lefroy will not be there. Lucy is to go with Mrs. Russell.

People get so horribly poor and economical in this part of the world that I have no patience with them. Kent is the only place for happiness ; everybody is rich there. I must do similar justice, however, to the Windsor neighbourhood. I have been forced to let James and Miss Debry have two sheets of your drawing-paper, but they shan't have any more ; there are not above three or four left, besides one of a smaller and richer sort. Perhaps you may want some more if you come through town in your return, or rather buy some more, for your wanting it will not depend on your coming through town, I imagine. I have just heard from Martha and Frank : his letter was written on November 12. All well and nothing particular

J. A.

II

CHAWTON, *Friday (May 31)*, 1811

MY DEAR CASSANDRA,—I have a magnificent project. The Cookes have put off their visit to us ; they are not well enough to leave home at present, and we have no chance of seeing them till I do not know when—probably never in this house.

This circumstance has made me think the present time would be favourable for Miss Sharpe's coming to us, it seems a more disengaged period with us than we are likely to have later in the summer. If Frank and Mary do come, it can hardly be before the middle of July, which will be allowing a reasonable length of visit for Miss Sharpe, supposing she begins it when you return ;

Comfort for a Thunderstorm

and if you and Martha do not dislike the plan, and she can avail herself of it, the opportunity of her being conveyed hither will be excellent.

I shall write to Martha by this post, and if neither you nor she make any objection to my proposal, I shall make the invitation directly, and as there is no time to lose, you must write by return of post if you have any reason for not wishing it done. It was her intention, I believe, to go first to Mr. Lloyd, but such a means of getting here may influence her otherwise.

We have had a thunder-storm again, this morning.

Your letter came to comfort me for it.

I have taken your hint, slight as it was, and have written to Mrs. Knight, and most sincerely do I hope it will not be in vain. I cannot endure the idea of her giving away her own wheel, and have told her no more than the truth, in saying that I could never use it with comfort. I had a great mind to add that, if she persists in giving it, I would spin nothing with it but a rope to hang myself, but I was afraid of making it appear a less serious matter of feeling than it really is.

I am glad you are so well yourself, and wish everybody else were equally so. I will not say that your mulberry-trees are dead, but I am afraid they are not alive. We shall have pease soon. I mean to have them with a couple of ducks from Wood Barn, and Maria Middleton, towards the end of next week.

From Monday to Wednesday Anna is to be engaged at Faringdon, in order that she may come in for the gaieties of Tuesday (the 4th), on Selborne Common, where there are to be volunteers and felicities of all kinds. Harriet B. is invited to spend the day with the John Whites, and her father and mother have very kindly undertaken to get Anna invited also.

The Plumbtree Problem

Harriet and Eliza dined here yesterday, and we walked back with them to tea—not my mother—she has a cold, which affects her in the usual way, and was not equal to the walk. She is better this morning, and I hope will soon physick away the worst part of it. It has not confined her; she has got out every day that the weather has allowed her.

Poor Anna is also suffering from *her* cold, which is worse to-day, but as she has no sore throat I hope it may spend itself by Tuesday. She had a delightful evening with the Miss Middletons—syllabub, tea, coffee; singing, dancing, a hot supper, eleven o'clock, everything that can be imagined agreeable. She desires her best love to Fanny, and will answer her letter before she leaves Chawton, and engages to send her a particular account of the Selborne day.

We cannot agree as to which is the eldest of the two Miss Plumbtrees; send us word. Have you remembered to collect pieces for the patch work? We are now at a standstill. I got up here to look for the old map, and can now tell you that it shall be sent to-morrow; it was among the great parcel in the dining-room. As to my debt of 3s. 6d. to Edward, I must trouble you to pay it when you settle with him for your boots.

We begun our China tea three days ago, and I find it very good. My companions know nothing of the matter. As to Fanny and her twelve pounds in a twelve month, she may talk till she is as black in the face as her own tea, but I cannot believe her—more likely twelve pounds to a quarter.

I have a message to you from Mrs. Cooke. The substance of it is, that she hopes you will take Bookham in your way home, and stay there as long as you can, and that when you must leave them they will convey

Miss Webb and the Letter R

you to Guildford. You may be sure that it is very kindly worded, and that there is no want of attendant compliments to my brother and his family.

I am very sorry for Mary, but I have some comfort in there being two curates now lodging in Bookham, besides their own Mr. Waineford, from Dorking, so that I think she must fall in love with one or the other.

How horrible it is to have so many people killed ! And what a blessing that one cares for none of them !

I return to my letter-writing from calling on Miss Harriot Webb, who is short and not quite straight, and cannot pronounce an R any better than her sisters ; but she has dark hair, a complexion to suit, and, I think, has the pleasantest countenance and manner of the three—the most natural.

She appears very well pleased with her new home, and they are all reading with delight Mrs. H. More's recent publication.

You cannot imagine—it is not in human nature to imagine—what a nice walk we have round the orchard. The row of beech looks very well indeed, and so does the young quickset hedge in the garden. I hear to-day that an apricot has been detected on one of the trees. My mother is perfectly convinced *now* that she shall not be overpowered by her cleft-wood, and I believe I would rather have more than less. Strange to tell, Mr. Prowting was *not* at Miss Lee's wedding, but his daughters had some cake, and Anna had her share of it.

I continue to like our old cook quite as well as ever, and, but that I am afraid to write in her praise, I could say that she seems just the servant for us. Her cookery is at least tolerable ; her pastry is the only deficiency.

God bless you, and I hope June will find you well, and bring us together.—Yours ever,

JANE

A Delay at Kingston

I hope you understand that I do not expect you to write on Sunday if you like my plan. I shall consider silence as consent.

III

HENRIETTA STREET, W.C.

Wednesday, September 15, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 [1813]

HERE I am, my dearest Cassandra, seated in the breakfast, dining, sitting-room, beginning with all my might. Fanny will join me as soon as she is dressed and begin her letter. We had a very good journey, weather and roads excellent; the three first stages for 1s. 6d., and our only misadventure the being delayed about a quarter of an hour at Kingston for horses, and being obliged to put up with a pair belonging to a hackney coach and their coachman, which left no room on the barouche box for Lizzy, who was to have gone her last stage there as she did the first; consequently we were all four within, which was a little crowded.

We arrived at a quarter past four, and were kindly welcomed by the coachman, and then by his master, and then by William, and then by Mrs. Pengird, who all met us before we reached the foot of the stairs. Mdme Bigion was below dressing us a most comfortable dinner of soup, fish, bouillée, partridges, and an apple tart, which we sat down to soon after five, after cleaning and dressing ourselves and feeling that we were most commodiously disposed of. The little adjoining dressing-room to our apartment makes Fanny and myself very well off indeed, and as we have poor Eliza's bed our space is ample every way.

Sace arrived safely at about half-past six. At seven we set off in a coach for the Lyceum, where at home

Henry Austen's Cold

again in about four hours and a half; had soup, and wine and water, and then went to our holes.

Edward finds his quarters very small and quiet. I must get a softer pen. This is harder. I am in agonies. I have not yet seen Mr. Crabbe. Martha's letter is gone to the post.

I am going to write nothing but short sentences. There shall be two full stops in every line. Layton and Shear's is Bedford House. We mean to get there before breakfast if it's possible; for we feel more and more how much we have to do and how little time. This house looks very nice. It seems like Sloane Street moved here. I believe Henry is just rid of Sloane Street. Fanny does not come, but I have Edward seated by me beginning a letter, which looks natural.

Henry has been suffering from the pain in the face which he has been subject to before. He caught cold at Matlock, and since his return has been paying a little for past pleasure. It is nearly removed now, but he looks thin in the face, either from the pain or the fatigues of his tour, which must have been great.

Lady Robert is delighted with *P. and P.*, and really *was* so, as I understand, before she knew who wrote it, for of course she knows now. He told her with as much satisfaction as if it were my wish. He did not tell *me* this, but he told Fanny. And Mr. Hastings! I am quite delighted with what such a man writes about it. Henry sent him the books after his return from Daylesford, but you will hear the letter too.

Let me be rational, and return to my two full stops.

I talked to Henry at the play last night. We were in a private box—Mr. Spencer's—which made it much more pleasant. The box is directly on the stage. One is infinitely less fatigued than in the common way. But

A London Holiday

Henry's plans are not what one could wish. He does not mean to be at Chawton till the 29th. He must be in town again by Oct. 5. His plan is to get a couple of days of pheasant shooting and then return directly.

His wish was to bring you back with him. I have told him of your scruples. He wishes you to suit yourself as to time, and if you cannot come till later, will send for you any time as far as Bagshot. He presumed you would not find difficulty in getting so far. I could not say you would. He proposed your going with him into Oxfordshire. It was his own thought at first. I could not but catch at it for you.

We have talked of it again this morning (for now we have breakfasted), and I am convinced that if you can make it suit in other respects you need not scruple on his account. If you cannot come back with him on the 3rd or 4th, therefore, I do hope you will contrive to go to Adlestrop. By not beginning your absence till about the middle of this month I think you may manage it very well. But you will think all this over. One could wish he had intended to come to you earlier, but it cannot be helped.

I said nothing to him of Mrs. H. and Miss B. that he might not suppose difficulties. Shall not you put them into our own room? This seems to me the best plan, and the maid will be most conveniently near. Oh, dear me! When shall I ever have done? We *did* go to Layton and Shear's before breakfast. Very pretty English poplins at 4s. 3d.; Irish ditto at 6s.; *more* pretty, certainly—beautiful.

Fanny and the two girls are gone to take places for to-night at Covent Garden; *Clandestine Marriage* and *Midas*. The latter will be a fine show for L. and M. They revelled last night in *Don Juan*, whom we left in

Miss Austen's New Gown

Hell at half-past eleven. We had Scaramouch and a ghost, and were delighted. I speak of *them* ; *my* delight was very tranquil, and the rest of us were sober-minded. *Don Juan* was the last of three musical things. *Five Hours at Brighton*, in three acts—of which one was over before we arrived, none the worse—and the *Beehive*, rather less flat and trumpery.

I have this moment received 5*l.* from kind, beautiful Edward. Fanny has a similar gift. I shall save what I can of it for your better leisure in this place. *My* letter was from Miss Sharpe—nothing particular. A letter from Fanny Cage this morning.

Four o'clock.—We are just come back from doing Mr. Tickars, Miss Hare, and Mr. Spence. Mr. Hall is here, and, while Fanny is under his hands, I will try to write a little more.

Miss Hare had some pretty caps, and is to make me one like one of them, only *white* satin instead of blue. It will be white satin and lace, and a little white flower perking out of the left ear, like Harriot Byron's feather. I have allowed her to go as far as 1*l.* 16*s.* My gown is to be trimmed everywhere with white ribbon plaited on somehow or other. She says it will look well. I am not sanguine. They trim with white very much.

I learnt from Mrs. Tickars' young lady, to my high amusement, that the stays now are not made to force the bosom up at all ; *that* was a very unbecoming, unnatural fashion. I was really glad to hear that they are not to be so much off the shoulders as they were.

Going to Mr. Spence's was a sad business and cost us many tears ; unluckily we were obliged to go a second time before he could do more than just look. We went first at half-past twelve and afterwards at three ; papa with us each time ; and, alas ! we are to go again to-morrow.

Dentist and Coiffeur

Lizzy is not finished yet. There have been no teeth taken out, however, nor will be, I believe, but he finds *hers* in a very bad state, and seems to think particularly ill of their durableness. They have been all cleaned, *hers* filed, and are to be filed again. There is a very sad hole between two of her front teeth.

Thursday morning, half-past seven.—Up and dressed and downstairs in order to finish my letter in time for the parcel. At eight I have an appointment with Madame B., who wants to show me something downstairs. At nine we are to set off for Grafton House, and get that over before breakfast. Edward is so kind as to walk there with us. We are to be at Mr. Spence's again at 11.5; from that time shall be driving about I suppose till four o'clock at least. We are, if possible, to call on Mrs. Tilson.

Mr. Hall was very punctual yesterday, and curled me out at a great rate. I thought its look hideous, and longed for a snug cap instead, but my companions silenced me by their admiration. I had only a bit of velvet round my head. I did not catch cold, however. The weather is all in my favour. I have no pain in my face since I left you.

We had very good places in the box next the stage-box, front and second row; the three old ones behind of course. I was particularly disappointed at seeing nothing of Mr. Crabbe. I felt sure of him when I saw that the boxes were fitted up with crimson velvet. The new Mr. Terry was Lord Ogleby, and Henry thinks he may do; but there was no acting more than moderate, and I was as much amused by the remembrances connected with *Midas* as with any part of it. The girls were very much delighted, but still prefer *Don Juan*; and I must say that I have seen nobody on the stage who has been a

Miss Austen's Extravagance

more interesting character than that compound of cruelty and lust.

It was not possible for me to get the worsteds yesterday. I heard Edward last night pressing Henry to come to you, and I think Henry engaged to go there after his November collection. Nothing has been done as to *S. and S.*

The books came to hand too late for him to have time for it before he went. Mr. Hastings never *hinted* at Eliza in the smallest degree. Henry knew nothing of Mr. Trimmer's death. I tell you these things that you may not have to ask them over again.

There is a new clerk sent down to Alton, a Mr. Edward Williams, a young man whom Henry thinks most highly of, and he turns out to be a son of the luckless Williamses of Grosvenor Place.

I long to have you hear Mr. H.'s opinion of *P and P*. His admiring my Elizabeth so much is particularly welcome to me.

Instead of saving my superfluous wealth for you to spend, I am going to treat myself with spending it myself. I hope, at least, that I shall find some poplin at Layton and Shear's that will tempt me to buy it. If I do, it shall be sent to Chawton, as half will be for you ; for I depend upon your being so kind as to accept it, being the main point. It will be a great pleasure to me. Don't say a word. I only wish you could choose too. I shall send twenty yards.


Now for Bath. Poor F. Cage has suffered a good deal from her accident. The noise of the White Hart was terrible to her. They will keep her quiet, I dare say. *She* is not so much delighted with the place as the rest of the party ; probably, as she says herself, from having been less well, but she thinks she should like it

A Good Grandmother

better in the season. The streets are very empty now, and the shops not so gay as she expected. They are at No. 1 Henrietta Street, the corner of Laura Place, and have no acquaintance at present but the Bramstons. Lady Bridges drinks at the Cross Bath, her son at the Hot, and Louisa is going to bathe. Dr. Parry seems to be half starving Mr. Bridges, for he is restricted to much such a diet as James's bread, water and meat, and is never to eat so much of that as he wishes, and he is to walk a great deal—walk till he drops, I believe—gout or no gout. It really is to that purpose.

I have not exaggerated.

Charming weather for you and me, and the travellers, and everybody. You will take your walk this afternoon, and . . .

Dame Dorothy Browne (Sir Thomas Browne's lady) gives postscript news of the health and well-being of Master Tommy Browne, her grandson 

I

Aug. 29 [1678]

DEARE SONNE,— . . . I bless God your Tomy is very well ; goos to scolle, and is a very good boy, and delights his grandfather when hee comes home.

II

June 28 [1679?]

DEARE DAUGHTER,— . . . Wee dayly wish for the new cloths ; all our linen being worne out but shefts, and Tomey would give all his stock to see his briches. I bless God wee ar all well as I hope you ar. Tomey presents his dutty, your sisters all love and services.—Your affectionate mother,

DOROTHY BROWNE

Tommy Browne's Puppet Show

III

July 5 [1679]

TOMEY have receved his cloues, and is much delighted, and sends you and his mother and grandmother dutty and thanckes, and meanes to war them carefully.

IV

Novemb. vii. [1679]

DEARE DAUGHTER,—I thanck God for your latter, and shall be so glad to see my Tomey returne in helth though ever so durty ; hee knows fullars earth will cleane all. I besich God of his mercy blesse you all.—Your affectinat mothar,

DOROTHY BROWNE

V

Sept. 6 [1680]

I BLESS God wee all continow wel, and Tomey present his dutty to you and his fathar, and give you many thanks for your touken. Hee did thinke to wright him selfe. Hee is now a very good boy for his boak, I can assuer you, and delights to read to his grandfather and I, when he coms from schole. God of his mercy bless you all.—Your affectinat mothar,

DOROTHY BROWNE

VI

Feb. xiii. [1681-2]

YOUR Tomey grows a stout fellow, I hope you will com and see him this svmmor, hee is in great expextion of a tumbler you must send him for his popet show, a punch he has and his wife, and a straw king and quen, and ladies of honor, and all things but a tumbler, which this town cannot aford : it is a wodin fellow that turns his heles over his head. . . .

IV

THE GRAND STYLE

The Swan of Lichfield greets the Ladies of Llangollen

(To the Right Hon. Lady Eleanor Butler, and
Miss Ponsonby)

LICHFIELD, *April 24, 1798*

THE frame for Honora's exact, though accidental, resemblance in the print of Romney's Serena reading by candle light, is at length arrived. I dare believe my charming friends will think the figure, countenance, and features express the sweetness, intelligence and grace, with which the strains, honoured by their mutual partiality, invest the fair friend of my youth.

You must each have been deeply disquieted by the miserable scenes which have been acted in your native Ireland since I had last the honour to address you. None of your particular friends are, I trust, on the dire list of those who have fallen the victims of its assassinations. Had my gallant friend, the murdered Colonel St. George, the happiness of your acquaintance?—Of him at least you must well know, from your intimacy with his lovely and accomplished sister-in-law.

Miss Seward improves Fénelon

My *Telemachus* has taken a snail's walk since I gave myself the pleasure of writing to you. Two mornings of leisure, the only ones I could obtain in the interim, produced the enclosed extract. You have heard me say, that I could scarcely ever persuade myself to admit the Muses, in exclusion of any social or epistolary duty or pleasure. Small, therefore, with connections and correspondence so numerous, is the probability that I shall ever finish an epic poem.

You will perceive that Fénelon's *Telemachus* forms as yet but the mere basis of this attempted work ; but I conclude, that when the prince, in what will form my third book, narrates his own adventures, I must be more indebted to the prose composition. Whether those incidents, not very interesting from Fénelon's pen, are capable of receiving poetic spirit and animation from mine, remains to be tried. If I retain my excursive manner of going over the ground, there will be sufficient length for an epic poem, without pursuing the long train of less animated events that ensues after Telemachus and Mentor quit Calypso's island. Homer follows not Achilles when he leaves the ruins of Troy ; and if Virgil had not followed Æneas after he left Carthage, his poem, though less complete, would have been more interesting. After the death of Dido I yawned through the remainder ; read it once as a task, and never since looked into the pages beyond that epoch.

Ah ! dearest ladies, how groundless has the assertion proved on which every one relied, that Duncan's victory threw the perils of invasion at a wide distance !—but I will not pursue the alarming subject.

This day a summer's sun warmly gilds the fields, the gardens, and the groves, now diffusing fragrance, and bursting into bloom. Fresh and undulating breezes from

Scenery at Lichfield

the east lured me into my drawing-room, having placed in its lifted sash the *Æolian* harp. It is, at this instant, warbling through all the varieties of the harmonic chords. This apartment looks upon a small lawn, gently sloping upwards. Till this spring, it was shrubbery to the edge of the grassy terrace on its summit ; but I have lately covered it with a fine turf, sprinkled with cypresses, junipers, and laurels. It is bordered on the right hand by tall laburnums, lilacks, and trees of the Gelder rose,

“——throwing up, 'mid trees of darker leaf,
Its silver globes, light as the foamy surf,
Which the wind severs from the broken wave.”

Beyond this little lawny elevation, the wall which divides its terrace from the sweet valley it overlooks, is not visible. These windows command the loveliest part of that valley, and only its first field is concealed by the sloping swell of the fore-ground.

The vale is scarcely half a mile across, bounded, basin-like, by a semicircle of gentle hills, luxuriantly foliaged. There is a lake in its bosom, and a venerable old church, with its grey and moss-grown tower on the water's edge. Left of that old church, on the rising ground beyond, stands an elegant villa half shrouded in its groves ; and, to the right below, on the bank of the lake, another villa with its gardens. The as yet azure waters are but little intercepted by the immense and very ancient willow that stands opposite these windows in the middle of the vale ; that willow, whose height and dimensions are the wonder of naturalists. The centre of the lake gleams through its wide-spread branches, and it appears on each side like a considerable river, from its boundaries being concealed.

On the right, one of our streets runs from the town to the water, interspersed with trees and gardens. It looks

“Vernal Luxury”

like an umbraged village, and is all we see from hence of the city, so that nothing can be more quiet and rural than the landscape. It is less beautiful in summer than in spring, from the weeds that sprout up in the lake, and from the set which partially creeps upon its surface.

In my youth, it was always clear—but it is said that, some fifteen years back, two of our gormandizing aldermen took a boat and sowed it with water-lilies to preserve the fish. The mischief is irreparable, since the cleansing it receives every autumn only procures transparence till the sun of middle summer enables the deep-rooted weeds to defy the scythe and the shovel.

What shall I say for the slovenliness of the inclosed transcripts?—Thus you behold my incorrigible pen sinning, from time to time, against the fairness of transcription,—sinning and confessing, like a frail papist, and repenting without amendment.

What lovely weather! Our valley is bursting into bloom, and the fruit trees of a large public garden in one part of it, now in full blossom, presents a grove of silver, amidst the lively and tender green of the fields and hedgerows. Alas! the melancholy of the apprehensive heart is rather increased than abated by this vernal luxury. It seems but as gay garlands on the neck of a victim.

In every frame of mind, I remain, dearest ladies, etc.

The Swan of Lichfield word-paints ♪ ♪ ♪

(To the Rev. Dr. Parr)

SCARBOROUGH, *July 27, 1793*

DISEASE gloomed, and made long my wintry and vernal hours, since I had the honour and delight of conversing with you in Warwickshire. Dr. Darwin

“The Smiles of Hygeia”

enjoined that I should go to Buxton in June, pass some weeks there, and then travel onward to the North Coast, for the benefit of the sea-bathing. Inexpressibly do I regret this watery discipline, whose necessity has deprived me of the power to receive that highly gratifying visit from Dr. Parr, the hope of which had been so precious.

Travelling thus far to obtain the smiles of Hygeia, I am ordered to wait upon her naiads on the ocean brim, during a period of equal length with that on which I courted those who administer at her soft fountains in Derbyshire. Having promised to pause on my way home with some friends of my infancy and youth in Yorkshire, it must be the second week in September ere I can return to Lichfield. I fear your attention to your pupils will not suffer me then to enjoy that pleasure of which this reluctant excursion has deprived me. Surely you could not doubt my being absent from Lichfield, when you waited in vain for an acknowledgment, so instantly due. May I hope to see you during the Christmas recess? Whenever you shall again extend to me an expectation thus flattering, I will avoid every interfering scheme.

My health is better than it was in the winter and spring, though I am still often indisposed. My obligations are perhaps more to the warmth of summer for this amendment, than to my libations from the naiads, and immersion in their waves, than to the attractions and repulsions of stranger intercourse; or even to the dearer society it has afforded me with long absent friends. When the spirit of youth has evaporated, fatigues are not easily recompensed to the languid, or broken habits to the stationary. Often, in this absence from our little city, do I look back with home-sick eyes to my umbrageous

Charlotte Corday

retreat beneath its spires, especially when the swart star glares.

This gay and busy shore has considerable picturesque beauty, as perhaps you are visually conscious ; but I regret that its seas have slept since my arrival in mirror calmness, and would have thanked the ruder winds to have lashed them into sublimity.

The pleasure of Mr. Dewes',-- of Mr. and Mrs. Grenville's, and Miss Delabere's society, allured me hither from my purposed residence, on the more retired coast of Bridlington, twenty miles from hence. Amiable Lord and Lady Lifford are of their party. My daily visits to them have constituted the chief though not the sole social charm of this bustling scene ; yet alas ! it has been often darkened by concern, to see dear Mr. Dewes so languid and out of health. We hope and trust, however, that his complaints are not dangerous.

That interesting group leave Scarborough on Monday, and therefore I have promised to meet my old friends of this country the ensuing week at Bridlington, if lodgings can be procured for us there.

Do you not admire this second Judith, the young fair one of Normandy, who has slain the bloody dictator at Paris, without waiting for his intoxication, or his slumber, to give her courage for the blow ?

Adieu, dear and honoured Sir. I dare assure myself, you rejoice that our political horizon is cleared of that lurid turbidity with which it scowled when we met in Warwickshire.

Invoked Sublimity

The Swan of Lichfield contemplates the ocean 

(To Mr. Saville)

SCARBOROUGH, *July 29, 1793*

THIS morning the dear party, vanishing from the cliff, dissolved for me the magnetism of Scarborough. I passed almost the whole of yesterday with them. Mr. Dewes, inquiring after you, most kindly bids me say, that he sincerely rejoices in the benefit your health has received from your excursion to Weymouth. He does not think himself better; but I trust he is mistaken. O! justly do you say, that we cannot afford to lose such men, so thinly sown in this thick-swarming world.

That I am most truly glad of the renovated health you have imbibed on the ocean's edge, you surely will not doubt; nor that I sympathise with every good that is ordained you, with every joy that you feel. I praise you for resisting the sailing temptations, for not trusting the flattery of the summer-seas, which has so often proved fatal where the security was no less apparent.

Whenever the wind blows from the east at this port, however calmly it may breathe on shore, the sea runs high. All yesterday it had a large portion of the sublimity I had invoked. About a quarter of a mile down the right-hand sands, a small promontory juts out; upon its topmost bank, about twenty yards high, the chalybeate springs arise; and there also a fort is constructed, with parapet walls, to which we ascend by steps. At high-water, the sea encircles this promontory, and lashes its rocks.

Last night, at eight o'clock, as we walked upon the cliff, we saw the waves of a sublimely agitated sea dashing

Miss Seward's Rage for the Terrific

and bounding up the sides of the fort, their spray flying over its parapets. The tide was then on the turn, and we were told that, in about an hour, we might walk to the promontory, by keeping close to the base of the rocks, and attain the elevation before the waves had ceased to lash and clamber up its walls. Nobody but myself being inclined to venture, I went home to undress, resolved to taste, amidst the incumbent gloom of a very lowering night, a scene congenial to my taste for the terrible graces. Requesting the stout arm of Mr. Dewes's servant, I began with him my sombre expedition. As I passed along the sands, the tide twice left its white surf upon my feet ; and the vast curve of those fierce waves, that burst down with deafening roar, scarce three yards from me, sufficiently gratified my rage for the terrific.

We found the lower steps of the fort inaccessible, from the waters not having yet receded from them ; but, with some difficulty, climbing behind the rocks, I got upon a level with the sixth step, and was thus enabled to ascend the eminence. By this time, the last gloom of the night had fallen, and the white foam of the thundering waters made their "darkness visible." It seemed scarce possible that an unconscious element could wear such horrid appearances of living rage. Each billow seemed a voraginous monster, as it came roaring on, and dashed itself against the repelling walls. The spray of each flashing wave flew over my head, and wet me on its descent. The pealing waters, louder than thunder, made it impossible for me or the servant to hear each other speak. My own maid would not venture to accompany me on an expedition of such seeming peril. I stood at least half an hour on the wild promontory's top, almost totally encircled by the dark and furious main. It was half past ten when I returned to Lord Lifford's, to take

An Umbrageous Dale

my leave of the party, and to acknowledge the infinitely kind attentions with which they had honoured me.

We passed Thursday last in a beautiful, a richly umbrageous, and romantic dale, about seven miles from hence ; the rival, in picturesque graces, of most which adorn the Peak of Derbyshire, with only one inferiority, its water. The Vale of Hackness boasts only a tolerably broad and gurgling brook, which presumptuously assumes the name of Darrent. Screened by overhanging alders, it winds through the bosom of the glens, and is scarce seen, except on its brink ; but, from the hills which encircle them, we see the ocean, covered with ships, stretching over the magnificent woods of Rainsford, that curtain the mountains with lavish luxuriance.

Mr. Dewes, and Master and Miss Hewit, the son and niece of Lord Lifford, and myself, went to Hackness in Lord Lifford's coach ; graceful and amiable Lady Lifford, and Mr. and Mrs. Granville, on horseback. The village, "marked with a little spire," nestles deep in the vale : near it a small rural inn, for the accommodation of the numerous parties which resort from Scarborough, to enjoy a scene of such striking contrast with the uncurtained beach, the monotonous ocean, and the crowded town, whose red houses run up the cliffs, and parch in the noontide suns.

At this petit inn we dined in great plenty and comfort ; our eggs and bacon, our cold mutton and pease, our roast fowl, and our gooseberry-pie, acquiring a relish from the ride, and previous ramble in the dale ; relish which seldom seasons the viands of a pompous board.

We drank tea on the shady brim of the stream that huddles through a rocky channel, and with its liquid notes, assists the waving alders and taller beeches in tempering the heats of the day.

The Wingfield Head-Dresses

It was a scene and a society to soothe every latent discontent of the heart, and, as Milton says of Eden, to “chace all sorrow but despair.”

I dine with the Wingfield party to-day, and accompany them to the ball at night. I went to the Friday assembly with Lady Lifford and Mrs. Granville. The present fashion of head-dress, unless tempered as it was by the hand of taste on Lady Lifford, Mrs. Granville, and Miss Wingfield, has an undoing influence upon youth and beauty. The Lady L——s had disposed their hair exactly to resemble the lank straight locks of a methodist parson, and wound it round with something they called turban, scarce resembling the Turkish head-dress, which is very graceful, and which Lady Lifford's, Mrs. Granville's, and Miss Wingfield's, as I observed before in my exception, did very much resemble; the Lady L——s looked like diseased heads bound up in towels. They were extremely unjust to their personal attractions. People who are of rank to lead the fashions, are either accountable for the false taste of ungraceful invention, or for grovelling acquiescence, in following the bad taste of others. Lady Susan is finely shaped, and dances accurately; but Lady Georgiana unites to all the skill and variety of step, the most joyous and liberal grace of the head and arms.—Adieu.

V
WITH A SPICE

Jane Welsh Carlyle tells all the news

I

(To T. Carlyle, Scotsbrig¹)

CLIFTON, *August 29, 1837*

DEAREST LOVE,—I have been too long waiting for certainties; *hithering* and *thithering* being a condition under which I find it almost impossible to write, or indeed to do anything except fret myself to fiddlestrings. What I generally do in such cases is to shape out a decision with all dispatch for *myself*, and leave the others to welter on in their own fashion. Accordingly, when I found on our arrival at Clifton that it was all in the wind whether we should stay there one week or two or three, and whether we should return straight to London or by Brighton, or by the Isle of Wight, or first making a “run over to Dublin,” I im-

¹ Is gone on a tour with the elder Mr. and Mrs. Sterling, while I am in Scotland rustivating and vegetating.—T. C.

“His Whirlwindship”

mediately announced my intention of descending by *Parachute*, and was only prevented from carrying it out by humane consideration for the parties in the Balloon, where there was evidently going to be an alarming explosion in case of my departure ; Mrs. Sterling having set her heart for a visit of some length to the Bartons, and his Whirlwindship finding the whole Barton generation “creatures without stimulus,” whom he was desirous to cut and run from, by “feeling it his duty to see poor Mrs. Carlyle ’ome.” His secret purpose was evidently to take himself and me back in the carriage, and leave Mrs. S. to follow as she could ; and this I felt would have been a very ungracious proceeding towards that good soul, who treats me with such kindness and consideration. I now perceive the use my company is of to them both, better than I did when we set out : I furnish, as it were, the sugar and ginger, which makes the alkali of the one and the tartaric acid of the other effervesce into a somewhat more agreeable draught ; for, “the effervescing of these people !” To say the least “it is very absurd !” But I shall keep all my stock of *biographic notices* to enliven our winter evenings. Meanwhile you are to know that we left Malvern for Clifton a week ago, all of us with very dry eyes.

Mr. Sterling, on finding that certain lords who smiled deceitful at the Carlton Club, were absolutely inaccessible at the Foley Arms, suddenly discovered that your beautiful scenery was a great humbug, as you had only “to strip the soil a foot deep and it would be a vile black mass.” Mrs. Sterling, in her querulous, qualifying, about it and about it way, doubted whether it was wholesome to overlook such a flat, “not but what it was very well to have seen *for once*, or if there was any necessity for living there, of course one would not object,” etc.,

Nature a show—and bore

etc.:—and, for me *poverina*, from the first moment I set my eyes on the place, I foresaw that it would prove a failure; that it would neither make me a convert to Nature, nor find me in a new nervous system. Every day of our stay there I arose with a headache, and my nights were unspeakable; every day I felt more emphatically that *Nature* was an intolerable bore. Do not misconstrue me,—genuine, unsophisticated Nature, I grant you, is all very amiable and harmless; but beautiful Nature, which man has *exploited*, as a Reviewer does a work of genius, making it a peg to hang his own conceits upon, to enact his *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit*¹ in,—beautiful Nature, which you look out upon from pea-green arbours, which you dawdle about in on the backs of donkeys, and where you are haunted with an everlasting smell of roast meat—all that I do declare to be the greatest of bores, and I would rather spend my days amidst acknowledged brick houses and paved streets, than in any such fools' paradise.

So entirely *unheimlich* I felt myself, that the day I got your Letter I cried over it for two or three hours. In other more favourable circumstances, I should have recognised the tone of sadness that ran all through it, as the simple effect of a tiresome journey, and a dose of physic at the end; but, read at Malvern, with headache and *ennui* for interpreters!—Alas! what could I do but fling myself on my bed and cry myself sick? I said to myself you were no better than when you left me, and all this absence was gone for nothing. I wanted to kiss you into something like cheerfulness, and the length of a kingdom was between us,—and if it had not—the probabilities are that, *with the best intentions*, I should have quarrelled with you rather. Poor men and poor

¹ Goethe's Dramas, *Triumph of Sensibility*.

Malvern amenities

women ! what a time they have in this world, by destiny and their own deserving. But as Mr. Bradfute used to say, "tell us something we do not know."

Well, then, it is an absolute fact that his Whirlwindship and I rode to the top of Malvern Hill, each on a live donkey ! Just figure it ! with a Welsh lad whipping us up from behind ; for they were the slowest of donkeys, though named in defiance of all probability, *Fly* and *Lively*. "The Devil confound your donkeys !" exclaimed my vivacious companion (who might really, I think, "but for the honour of the thing," and perhaps some small diminution of the danger of bursting his lungs, have as well walked !) "they are so stupidly stubborn that you might as well beat on a stick." "And isn't it a good thing they be stubborn, Sir?" said the lad, "as being, you see, that they have no sense ; if they wasn't stubborn they might be for taking down the steep, and we wants no accidents, Sir." "Now," said I, "for the first time in my life I perceive why Conservatives are so stupidly stubborn ; stubbornness, it seems, is a succedaneum for *sense*."—A flash of indignation—then in a soft tone, "Do you know, Mrs. Carlyle, you would be a vast deal more amiable, if you were not so damnably clever ! This is a fair specimen of our talk at Malvern from dewy morn to balmy eve. My procedure at Worcester (where we passed two days, and whence I sent a Newspaper) was unexpected and disappointing in the extreme. I walked into the house of the illustrious Archdeacon along a lengthy passage, down two steps into an antique-looking drawing-room or suite of drawing-rooms ; without giving proof of being anything out of the common. I cast my *nota-bene* eyes over the man :—a large portly figure, belonging to the rotund school, the very beau ideal of an old Abbot, with a

The Archidiaconal bed

countenance full of twinkling intelligence and gregarious good humour, having a high metallic tone of voice, and a whisking suddenness of movement, accompanied by a peculiar fling of the coat-skirts, which reminded me forcibly of the *Archivarius Lindhorst*. I also flung a cursory glance on a table, where a massive lunch was spread out, such as realised one's sublimest conceptions of a Convent refectory; and then without more said or done, I pitched myself into a fluffy, snow-white bed, which was shown me as mine; where I lay twenty-four hours, not out of sheer contradiction, but because I really could no longer hold myself erect. In vain the prim Archdeconian *Perpetua* came at stated intervals to know if I wanted anything? receiving always for answer, "To be let alone"; and in vain the Whirlwind himself came at intervals not stated, to ask in a tone of deep, tho' loud pathos (for it was from outside the door) "if I believed that he was *exceedingly* sorry," receiving also one unvarying answer, "Yes, yes!" My headache refused to listen to the voice of either charmer till it had run its course. It was indeed a strange preternatural night, the first I passed in that Prebendary Establishment, right under the stroke (it seemed to me) of the great cathedral clock, which strikes even the quarters, haunted by the images of the large Archdeaconess and large pigeon-pie I had seen below, and surrounded by queer old cabinets and gigantic china bowls;—all which taken together had to my over-excited imagination a cast of magic! Especially in the dead of night, with a rushlight dimly lighting the chamber; and betwixt sleeping and waking. I repeatedly sprang up in a panic, with my head quite mystified between this Worcester Archdeacon and the German Archivarius, and could by no possibility *decide*

“Lack of Stimulus”

whether Archdeacon Singleton was not also the father of a green serpent and could make his face into a bronze knocker! Worthy man, when he welcomed me anew next day with the broadest smiles, he little suspected what strange thoughts I had had of him.

But I have quite miscalculated my distance, and have left no room for my travels' history since. The loss will not be material. Suffice it to say, we came from Malvern to Chepstow all in one day, besides “doing” Eastnor Castle, Goodrich Castle, Tintern Abbey, and Chepstow Castle; and the next, on to Clifton; thoroughly tired body and soul. We are in lodgings here: I have a quiet room, and sleep better. Every day we dine with the Bartons, the kindest people to dine with one could wish; but as he says, there is a lack of *stimulus*. The Brother that is returned from India is the most wonderful compound appearance of Cavaignac and—Mr. Bradfute: *ecco la combinazione!*¹ And now here is surprising news for you:—John Sterling is to be back in London, with his Wife and her little ones, about the 12th. He himself having turned towards Madeira, in consequence of cholera abroad; and the family to remain at Knightsbridge; which I do not think his Father half likes. Poor John is really a little flighty, “after all.”

I fondly hope to quit Clifton the end of this present week; and to go home by the *base* of the isosceles triangle, which the Isle of Wight makes with Clifton and London, instead of along the two sides. I long

¹ Curious and tragicomical indeed; yet conceivable to me; like that of a sternly sorrowful leopard, with a pitifully ditto hare! Cavaignac is Godfroi, elder Brother of Eugène, subsequently President of the French Republic; Bradfute is the old Edinburgh Bookseller.—T. C.

Reading for an Uncle

for home, and to be putting in order for your coming. I shall send you a Newspaper immediately on my landing ; and then you will write to say *when*. O, my Darling, we will surely be better, both of us, *there* again ; effervescing even :—don't you think so? I made no “mark”—wrote nothing on any Newspaper,—it must have been some editorial mark of Mr. Sterling, which I had not noticed. I have sent you Papers from every large Town where I have been.

I have kept no room for kind messages. Say for me all that you know I would wish to say. I saw the Crawfords at Monmouth. Mr. C. is most emphatic for another Course of Lectures :—the *characters*, he thought a most glorious project. I have no doubt but you will find an audience prepared to be enchanted with you, whenever you want one.—The Book seems to be much more *popular* than I ever expected. Archdeacon Singleton finds nothing Radical in it !

J. W. C. (No room for more).

II

(To Miss Helen Welsh, Liverpool)

CHELSEA, *March* 1843

MY DEAREST HELEN,—After (in *Dumfries and Galloway-Courier* phraseology) “taking a bird's-eye view” of all modern literature, I am arrived at the conclusion that, to find a book exactly suited to my uncle's taste, I must write it myself ! and, alas, that cannot be done before to-morrow morning !

La Motte Fouqué's *Magic Ring* suggests Geraldine (Jewsbury). “Too mystical ! My uncle detests confusion of ideas.” “Paul de Kock? *he* is very witty.” “Yes, but

New Books in 1843

also very indecent ; and my uncle would not relish indecencies read aloud to him by his daughters." "Oh ! ah ! well ! Miss Austen ?" "Too washy ; water-gruel for mind and body at the same time were too bad." Timidly, and after a pause, "Do you think he could stand Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame* ?" The idea of my uncle listening to the sentimental monstrosities of Victor Hugo ! A smile of scorn was this time all my reply. But in my own suggestions I have been hardly more fortunate. All the books that pretend to amuse in our day come, in fact, either under that category, which you except against, "the extravagant, clown-jesting sort," or still worse, under that of what I should call the galvanised-death's-head-grinning sort. There seems to be no longer any genuine heart-felt mirth in writers of books ; they sing and dance still *vigoureusement*, but one sees always too plainly that it is not voluntarily, but only for halfpence ; and for halfpence they will crack their windpipes, and cut capers on the crown of their heads, poor men that they are !

I bethink me of one book, however, which we have lately read here, bearing a rather questionable name as a book for my uncle, but, nevertheless, I think he would like it. It is called *Passages from the Life of a Radical*, by Samuel Bamford, a silk-weaver of Middleton. He was one of those who got into trouble during the Peterloo time ; and the details of what he then saw and suffered are given with a simplicity, an intelligence, and absence of everything like party violence, which it does one good to fall in with, especially in these inflated times.

There is another book that might be tried, though I am not sure that it has not a little too much affinity with water-gruel, *The Neighbours*, a domestic novel translated

Macready in Private Life

from the Swedish by Mary Howitt. There is a "Little Wife" in it, with a husband, whom she calls "Bear," that one never wearies of, although they never say or do anything in the least degree extraordinary.

Geraldine strongly recommends Stephens' *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia, and Petrea*, as "very interesting and very short." Also Waterton's *Wanderings in South America*. There are two novels of Paul de Kock translated into English, which might be tried at least without harm done, for they are unexceptionable in the usual sense of that term, the *Barber of Paris*, and *Sister Anne*.

I have read the last, not the first, and I dare say it would be very amusing for anyone who likes *Gil Blas* and that sort of books; for *my* taste it does not get on fast enough.

There! enough of books for one day. Thank you for your letter, dear. If I had not wee angels to write me consolatory missives at present, I should really be terribly ill off. My maid continues highly inefficient, myself ditto; the weather complicates everything; for days together not a soul comes; and then if the sun glimmers forth a whole rush of people breaks in, to the very taking away of one's breath!

Yesterday, between the hours of three and five, we had old Sterling, Mr. and Mrs. Von Glehen, Mr. and Mrs. Macready, John Carlyle, and William Cunningham. Geraldine professed to be mightily taken with Mrs. Macready; not so much so with "William." Poor dear William! I never thought him more interesting, however. To see a man who is exhibiting himself every night on a stage, blushing like a young girl in a private room, is a beautiful phenomenon for me. His wife whispered into my ear, as we sat on the sofa together, "Do you know

Helen's Red Herring

poor William is in a perfect agony to-day at having been brought here in that great-coat? It is a stage great-coat, but was only worn by him twice; the piece it was made for did not succeed, but it was such an expensive coat, I would not let him give it away; and doesn't he look well in it?" I wish Jeannie had seen him in the coat—magnificent fur neck and sleeves, and such frogs on the front. He did look well, but so heartily ashamed of himself.

Oh, I must tell you, for my uncle's benefit, a domestic catastrophe that occurred last week! One day, after dinner, I heard Helen lighting the fire, which had gone out, in the room above, with a perfectly unexampled vengeance; every stroke of the poker seemed an individual effort of concentrated rage. What ails the creature now? I said to myself. Who has incurred her sudden displeasure? or is it the red herring she had for dinner which has disagreed with her stomach? (for in the morning, you must know, when I was ordering the dinner, she had asked, might *she* have a red herring? "her heart had been set upon it this a good while back:" and, of course, so modest a petition received an unhesitating affirmative). On her return to the subterranean, the same hubbub wild arose from below, which had just been trying my nerves from above; and when she brought up the tea-tray, she clanked it on the lobby-table, as if she were minded to demolish the whole concern at one fell stroke. I looked into her face inquiringly as she entered the room, and seeing it black as midnight (*morally*, that is), I said very coolly, "A little less noise, if you please; you are getting rather loud upon us." She cast up her eyes with the look of a martyr at the stake, as much as to say, "Well, if I must be quiet, I must; but you little know my

The Cat's Red Herring

wrongs." By-and-by Geraldine went to the kitchen for some reason ; she is oftener in the kitchen in one day than I am in a month, but that is irrelevant. "Where is the cat?" said she to Helen ; "I have not seen her all night." She takes a wonderful, most superfluous charge of the cat, as of everything else in this establishment. "The cat !" said Helen grimly, "I have all but killed her." "How?" said Geraldine. "With the besom," replied the other. "Why? for goodness' sake." "Why!" repeated Helen, bursting out into new rage ; "why indeed? Because she ate my red herring! I set it all ready on the end of the dresser, and she ran away with it, and ate it every morsel to the tail—such an unheard of thing for the brute to do. Oh, if I could have got hold of her, she should not have got off with her life!" "And have you had no dinner?" asked Geraldine. "Oh yes, I had mutton enough, but I had just set my heart on a red herring." Which was the most deserving of having a besom taken to her, the cat or the woman?

My love to Babbie ; her letter to-day is most comfortable. Blessings on you all.—Your affectionate cousin,

J. WELSH

III

(To T. Carlyle, Esq., at Scotsbrig)

CHELSEA, *Friday morning, August 18, 1843*

DEAREST,—If you expect a spirited letter from me to-day, I grieve that you will be disappointed. I am not mended yet : only mending, and that present participle (to use Helen's favourite word for the weather) is extremely "dilatatory." The pains in my limbs are

The Controversial Grooms

gone, however, leaving only weakness ; and my head aches now with "a certain" moderation !—still enough to spoil all one's enjoyment of life—if there be any such thing for some of us—and, what is more to the purpose, enough to interfere with one's "did intends," which in my case grow always the longer the more manifold and complicated.

Darwin came yesterday after my dinner-time (I had dined at three), and remarked, in the course of some speculative discourse, that I "looked as if I needed to go to Gunter's and have an ice !" Do you comprehend what sort of look that can be ? Certainly he was right, for driving to Gunter's and having an ice revived me considerably : it was the first time I had felt up to crossing the threshold, since I took Bessie Mudie to the railway the same evening I returned from Ryde. Darwin was very clever yesterday : he remarked *apropos* of a pamphlet of Maurice's (which, by the way, is come for you), entitled *A Letter to Lord Ashley respecting a certain proposed measure for stifling the expression of opinion in the University of Oxford*, that pamphlets were for some men just what a fit of the gout was for others—they cleared the system, so that they could go on again pretty comfortably for a while. He told me also a curious conversation amongst three grooms, at which Wrightson had assisted the day before in a railway carriage, clearly indicating to what an alarming extent the schoolmaster is abroad ! Groom the first took a pamphlet from his pocket, saying he had bought it two days ago and never found a minute to read it. Groom the second inquired the subject. First Groom : "Oh, a hit at the Puseyists." Second Groom : "The Puseyists ? Ha, they are for bringing us back to the times when people burnt one another !" First Groom (tapping second groom on the shoulder with the

“Vaixed nevertheless”

pamphlet): “Charity, my brother, charity!” Third Groom: “Well, I cannot say about the Puseyists; but my opinion is that what we need is more Christianity and less religionism!”

Now Wrightson swears that every word of this is literally as the men spoke it—and certainly Wrightson could not invent it.

I had a long letter from old Sterling, which stupidly I flung into the fire in a rage (The fire? Yes, it is only for the last two days that I have not needed fire in the mornings!); and I bethought me afterwards that I had better have sent it to you, whom its cool Robert Macaire impudence might have amused. Only fancy his inviting me to come back, and “this time he would take care that I should have habitable lodgings!” His letter began, “The last cord which held me to existence here is snapped,”—meaning me! and so on. Oh! “the devil fly away with” the old sentimental curmudgeon!

I had letters from both Mr. and Mrs. Buller yesterday explaining their having failed to invite me; she appears to have been worse than ever, and is likely to be soon here again. Poor old Buller’s modest hope that the new medicine “may not turn madam blue” is really touching!

Here is your letter come. And you have not yet got any from me since my return! Somebody must have been very negligent, for I wrote to you on Sunday, added a postscript on Monday, and sent off both letter and newspapers by Helen, in perfectly good time. It is most provoking after one has been (as Helen says) “just most particular” not to *vaix* you, to find that you have been *vaixed* nevertheless. . . .

Mazzini Embarrassed

IV

(To T. Carlyle, Esq., Scotsbrig)

CHELSEA, *Thursday, September 18, 1845*

MY DEAR, . . . I have got quite over the fatigues of my journey, which had been most provokingly aggravated for me by a circumstance "which it may be interesting not to state"; the last two nights I have slept quite as well as I was doing at Seaforth. The retirement of Cheyne Row is as deep at present as anyone not absolutely a Timon of Athens could desire. "There is, in the first place" (as Mr. Paulet would say), the physical impossibility (hardly anybody being left in town), and then the weather has been so tempestuous that nobody in his senses (except Mazzini, who never reflects whether it be raining or no) would come out to make visits. He (Mazzini) came the day before yesterday, immediately on receiving notification of my advent, and his doe-skin boots were oozing out water in a manner frightful to behold. He looked much as I left him, and appeared to have made no progress of a practical sort. He told me nothing worth recording, except that he had received the other day a declaration of love. And this he told with the same *calma* and historical precision with which you might have said you had received an invitation to take the chair at a Mechanics' Institute dinner. Of course I asked "the particulars." "Why not?" and I got them fully, at the same time with brevity, and without a smile. Since the assassination affair, he had received many invitations to the house of a Jew merchant of Italian extraction, where there are several daughters—"what shall I say?—horribly ugly: that is, repugnant for me entirely." One of them is "nevertheless very strong in music," and seeing that he

“Colours in his face”

admired her playing, she had “in her head confounded the playing with the player.”

The last of the only two times he had availed himself of their attentions, as they sat at supper with Browning and some others, “the youngest of the horrible family” proposed to him, in *sotto voce*, that they two should drink “a goblet of wine” together, each to the person that each loved most in the world.

“I find your toast *unegoist*,” said he, “and I accept it with pleasure.” “But,” said she, “when we have drunk, we will then tell each other to whom?” “Excuse me,” said he, “we will, if you please, drink without conditions.” Whereupon they drank; “and then this girl—what shall I say? bold, upon my honour—proposed to tell me to whom she had drunk, and trust to my telling her after. ‘As you like.’ ‘Well, then, it was to you!’ ‘Really?’ said I, surprised I must confess. ‘Yes,’ said she, pointing aloft, ‘true as God exists.’ ‘Well,’ said I, ‘I find it strange.’ ‘Now, then,’ said she, ‘to whom did you drink?’ ‘Ah!’ said I, ‘that is another question;’ and on this, that girl became ghastly pale, so that her sister called out, ‘Nina! what is the matter with you?’ and now, thank God, she has sailed to Aberdeen.” Did you ever hear anything so distracted? enough to make one ask if R—— has not some grounds for his extraordinary ideas of English women.

The said R—— presented himself here, last night, in an interregnum of rain, and found me in my dressing-gown (after the wetting), expecting no such *Himmelssendung*. I looked as beautifully unconscious as I could of all the amazing things I had been told of him at Seaforth. He talked much of “a dreadful illness;” but looked as plump as a pincushion, and had plenty of what Mr. Paulet calls “colours in his face.” He seemed less distracted than

The Private Theatricals

usual, and professed to have discovered, for the first time, "the infinite blessedness of work," and also to be "making money at a great rate—paying off his debts by five or six pounds a week." I remarked that he must surely have had a prodigious amount of debt to begin with.—Kind regards to your mother and the rest. J. C.

V

(To T. Carlyle, Esq., Scotsbrig)

Tuesday, September 23, 1845

"**N**OTHINK" for you to-day in the shape of inclosure, unless I inclose a letter from Mrs. Paulet to myself, which you will find as "entertaining" to the full as any of mine. And *nothink* to be told either, except all about the play; and upon my honour, I do not feel as if I had a penny-a-liner genius enough, this cold morning, to make much entertainment out of that. Enough to clasp one's hands, and exclaim, like Helen before the Virgin and Child, "Oh, how expensive!" But "how did the creatures get through it?" Too well; and not well enough! The public theatre, scenes painted by Stanfield, costumes "rather exquisite," together with the certain amount of proficiency in the amateurs, overlaid all idea of private theatricals; and, considering it as public theatricals, the acting was "most insipid," not one performer among them that could be called good, and none that could be called absolutely bad. Douglas Jerrold seemed to me the best, the oddity of his appearance greatly helping him; he played Stephen the Cull, Forster as Kitley, and Dickens as Captain Bobadil, were much on a par; but Forster preserved his identity, even through his loftiest flights of Macreadyism; while poor

Alfred Tennyson, caryatid

little Dickens, all painted in black and red, and affecting the voice of a man of six feet, would have been unrecognisable to the mother that bore him! On the whole, to get up the smallest interest in the thing, one needed to be always reminding oneself: "all these actors were once men!"¹ and will be men again to-morrow morning. The greatest wonder for me was how they had contrived to get together some six or seven hundred ladies and gentlemen (judging from the clothes) at this season of the year: and all utterly unknown to me, except some half-dozen.

So long as I kept my seat in the dress circle I recognised only Mrs. Macready (in one of the four private boxes), and in my nearer neighbourhood Sir Alexander and Lady Gordon. But in the interval betwixt the play and the farce I took a notion to make my way to Mrs. Macready. John, of course, declared the thing "clearly impossible, no use trying it;" but a servant of the theatre, overhearing our debate, politely offered to escort me where I wished; and then John, having no longer any difficulties to surmount, followed, to have his share in what advantages might accrue from the change. Passing through a long dim passage, I came on a tall man leant to the wall, with his head touching the ceiling like a caryatid, to all appearance asleep, or resolutely trying it under the most unfavourable circumstances. "Alfred Tennyson!" I exclaimed in joyful surprise. "Well!" said he, taking the hand I held out to him, and forgetting to let it go again. "I did not know you were in town," said I. "I should like to know who you are," said he; "I know that I know you, but I cannot tell your name." And I had actually

¹ Speech of a very young Wedgwood at a Woolwich review: "Ah, papa, all these soldiers were once men."—T. C.

In the Macreadys' Box

to name myself to him. Then he woke up in good earnest, and said he had been meaning to come to Chelsea. "But Carlyle is in Scotland," I told him with humility. "So I heard from Spedding already, but I asked Spedding, would he go with me to see Mrs. Carlyle? and he said he would." I told him if he really meant to come, he had better not wait for backing, under the present circumstances; and then pursued my way back to the Macreadys' box; where I was received by William (whom I had not divined) with a "Gracious heavens!" and spontaneous dramatic start, which made me all but answer, "Gracious heavens!" and start dramatically in my turn. And then I was kissed all round by his women; and poor Nell Gwyn, Mrs. M—— G—— seemed almost pushed by the general enthusiasm on the distracted idea of kissing me also!

They would not let me return to my stupid place, but put in a third chair for me in front of their box; "and the latter end of that woman was better than the beginning." Macready was in perfect ecstasies over the "Life of Schiller," spoke of it with tears in his eyes. As "a sign of the times," I may mention that in the box opposite sat the Duke of Devonshire, with Payne Collier! Next to us were D'Orsay and "Milady!"

Between eleven and twelve it was all over—and the practical result? Eight-and-sixpence for a fly, and a headache for twenty-four hours! I went to bed as wearied as a little woman could be, and dreamt that I was plunging through a quagmire seeking some herbs which were to save the life of Mrs. Maurice; and that Maurice was waiting at home for them in an agony of impatience, while I could not get out of the mud-water!

Craik arrived next evening (Sunday), to make his

Helen visits Numbers

compliments. Helen had gone to visit numbers,¹ John was smoking in the kitchen. I was lying on the sofa, headachey, leaving Craik to put himself to the chief expenditure of wind, when a cab drove up. Mr. Strachey? No. Alfred Tennyson alone! Actually, by a superhuman effort of volition he had put himself into a cab, nay, brought himself away from a dinner party, and was there to smoke and talk with me!—by myself—me! But no such blessedness was in store for him. Craik prosed, and John babbled for his entertainment; and I, whom he had come to see, got scarcely any speech with him. The exertion, however, of having to provide him with tea, through my own unassisted ingenuity (Helen being gone for the evening) drove away my headache; also perhaps a little feminine vanity at having inspired such a man with the energy to take a cab on his own responsibility, and to throw himself on providence for getting away again! He stayed till eleven, Craik sitting him out, as he sat out Lady H——, and would sit out the Virgin Mary should he find her here.

What with these unfortunate mattresses (a work of necessity) and other processes almost equally indispensable, I have my hands full, and feel “worried,” which is worse. I fancy my earthquake begins to “come it rather strong” for John’s comfort and ease, but I cannot help that; if I do not get on with my work, such as it is, what am I here for?—Yours,

J. C.

¹ No. 5, or the like, denoting maid-servants there.—T. C.

A Penny-a-Liner

VI

(To T. Carlyle, Esq., Scotsbrig)

Wednesday, October 1, 1845

WELL! now I am subsided again; set in for a quiet evening, at leisure to write, and with plenty to write about. I know not how it is, I seem to myself to be leading a most solitary, and virtuous, and eventless life here, at this dead season of the year; and yet when I sit down to write, I have so many things to tell always that I am puzzled where to begin. Decidedly, I was meant to have been a subaltern of the Daily Press—not “a penny-lady,”¹ but a penny-a-liner; for it is not only a faculty with me, but a necessity of my nature to make a great deal out of nothing.

To begin with something I have been treasuring up for a week (for I would not holloa till we were out of the wood): I have *put down the dog!*² “The dog! wasn’t he put down at Christmas, with a hare?” It seemed so; and “we wished we might get it!” But on my return I found him in the old place, at the back of the wall, barking “like—like—anything!” “Helen!” I said, with the calmness of a great despair, “is not that the same dog?” “Deed is it!” said she, “and the whole two months you have been away, its tongue has never lain! it has driven even me almost distracted!” I said no more, but I had my own thoughts on the subject. Poison?

¹ In Scotland the “Penny Ladies” (extraneously so-called) were busy, “benevolent” persons; subscribers of a penny a week for educating, etc.: not with much success.—T. C.

² Oh, my heroine! Endless were her feats in regard to all this, and her gentle talents too! I could not have lived here but for that, had there been nothing more.—T. C.

A New Catastrophe

a pistol bullet? the Metropolitan Police? Some way or other that dog—or I—must terminate.

Meanwhile I went on cleaning with what heart I could. "My dear! Will you hasten to the catastrophe?" I am hastening, slowly—*festina lente*. Bless your heart! "there's nothing pushing"—"the rowins¹ are a' in the loft" for this night! Well! it was the evening after John's departure.

I had been too busy all day to listen; the candles were lit, and I had set myself with my feet on the fender to enjoy the happiness of being let alone, and to—bid myself "consider." "Bow-wow-wow," roared the dog, "and dashed the cup of fame from my brow!" "Bow-wow-wow," again, and again, till the whole universe seemed turned into one great dog-kennel! I hid my face in my hands and groaned inwardly. "Oh, destiny accursed! what use of scrubbing and sorting? All this availeth me nothing, so long as the dog sitteth at the washerman's gate!" I could have burst into tears, but I did not! "I was a republican—before the Revolution; and I never wanted energy!" I ran for ink and paper, and wrote:—

"DEAR GAMBARDELLA,—You once offered to shoot some cocks for me; that service I was enabled to dispense with; but now I accept your devotion. Come, if you value my sanity, and——" But here, "a sudden thought struck me." He could not take aim at the dog without scaling the high wall, and in so doing he would certainly be seized by the police; so I threw away that first sibylline leaf, and wrote another—to the washerman! Once more I offered him "any price for that horrible dog—to hang it," offered "to settle a yearly income on

¹ "Rowins" are wool completely carded, ready for the wheel when it comes down from "the loft."—T. C.

Mocking the Deserving

it if it would hold its accursed tongue." I implored, threatened, imprecated, and ended by proposing that, in case he could not take an immediate final resolution, he should in the interval "make¹ the dog dead-drunk with a bottle of whiskey, which I sent for the purpose!" Helen was sent off with the note and whiskey; and I sat, all concentrated, awaiting her return, as if the fate of nations had depended on my diplomacy; and so it did, to a certain extent! Would not the inspirations of "the first man in Europe" be modified,² for the next six months at least, by the fact, who should come off victorious, I or the dog? Ah! it is curious to think how first men in Europe, and first women too, are acted upon by the inferior animals!

Helen came, but even before that had "the raven down of night" smoothed itself in heavenly silence!

God grant this were not mere accident; oh, no! verily it was not accident. The washerman's two daughters had seized upon and read the note; and what was death to me had been such rare amusement to them, that they "fell into fits of laughter" in the first place; and, in the second place, ran down and untied the dog, and solemnly pledged themselves that it should "never trouble me more!" At Christmas they had sent it into the country for three months "to learn to be quiet," and then chained it in the old place; now they would take some final measure. Next morning came a note from the washerman himself, written on glazed paper, with a crow-quill, apologising, promising; he could not put it away entirely; as it was "a great protection" to him, and "belonged to a relative" (who shall say where

¹ Mark, mark!—T. C.

² Quiz mainly this. and glad mockery of some who deserved it.—
T. C.

The Cheyne Row Dog

sentiment may not exist !), but he "had untied it, and would take care it gave me no further trouble," and he "returned his grateful thanks for what 'as been sent." It is a week ago ; and one may now rest satisfied that the tying up caused the whole nuisance. The dog is to be seen going about there all day in the yard, like any other Christian dog, "carrying out" your principle of silence, not merely "platonically," but practically.

Since that night, as Helen remarks, "it has not said one word !" So, "thanks God," you still have quietude to return to !¹

I took tea with Sterling on Monday night ; walked there, and he sent the carriage home with me. It is very difficult to know how to do with him. He does not seem to me essentially mad ; but rather mad with the apprehension of madness ; a state of mind I can perfectly understand — moi. He forgets sometimes Anthony's name, for example, or mine ; or how many children he has ; and then he gets into a rage, that he cannot recollect ; and then he stamps about, and rings the bell, and brings everybody in the house to "help him to remember" ; and when all will not do, he exclaims : "I am going mad, by God !" and then he is mad, as mad as a March hare.

I can do next to nothing for him, beyond cheering him up a little, for the moment. Yesterday, again, I went a little drive with him ; of course, not without Saunders as well as the coachman. He told me that when he heard I had written about him, he "cried for three days." Anthony's desertion seems the central point, around which all his hypochondriacal ideas congregate. Anthony has never written him the scrape of a pen, since he left

¹ Well do I remember that dog, behind the wall, on the other side of the street. Never heard more.—T. C.

Mazzini is Loved Again

him insensible at Manchester ; nor even written about him, so far as himself or his manservant knows.

Whom else have I seen ? Nobody else, I think, except Mazzini, whom I was beginning to fancy the Jewess must have made an *enlèvement* of ; and *enlevé* he had been, sure enough, but not by the Jewess—by himself, and only the length of Oxford ; or rather he meant to go only the length of Oxford ; but, with his usual practicality, let himself be carried sixty miles further, to a place he called Swinton. Then, that the journey back might have also its share of misadventure, he was not in time to avail himself of the place he had taken, “in the second class” ; but had to jump up, “quite promiscuously,” beside “the conductor,” where he had “all the winds of heaven blowing on him, and through him ;” the result a “dreadful cold.” Dreadful it must have been when it confined him to the house. Meanwhile he had had—two other declarations of love !! They begin to be as absurd as the midges in Mr. Fleming’s “right eye.” “What ! more of them ?” “Ah yes ! unhappily ! they begin to—to what shall I say ?—rain on me like *sauterelles* !” One was from a young lady in Genoa, who sent him a bracelet of her hair (the only feature he has seen of her) ; and begged “to be united to him—in plotting !” “That one was good, upon my honour.” “And the other ?” “Ah ! from a woman here, married, thanks God ; though to a man fifty years more old—French, and sings—the other played, decidedly my love of music has consequences !” “And how did she set about it ?” “*Franchement* ; through a mutual friend ; and then she sent me an invitation to supper ; and I returned for answer that I was going to Oxford ; where I still am, or will remain a long, long time !” *Emancipation de la femme !* we would say, it marches almost faster than intellect. And now, if there be not clatter

A Night Adventure

enough for one night, I have a great many half-moons and stars to cut in paper before I go to bed. For what purpose? That is my secret. "And you wish that you could tell!"

Good-night. *Schlaf Wohl.*

J. C.

VII

(To Mrs. Russell, Thornhill)

CHELSEA, *November 28, 1856*

MY DARLING, . . . Oh, such a fright I got last Friday morning! Thursday night was my *second* night of something like human sleep. I had fallen asleep about three, and was still sleeping off and on between six and seven, when I was startled wide awake by a heavy fall in the room directly over mine (Mr. C.'s bedroom); I knew in the very act of waking, that it was no table or inanimate thing that made the sound, but a human body,—Mr. C.'s of course—the only human body there! What *could* I think but that he had got up ill, and fallen down in a fit? I threw myself out of bed, tore open my door and began to run upstairs. But my legs got paralysed; I leant against the wall and screamed. In answer to my scream, came Mr. C.'s voice, calling out quite *jolly*, "It's nothing, my Dear! Go back to your bed; it is a mistake: I will be there presently!" Back to bed I crept; and then if it had been in my constitution to take a fit of hysterics I should have taken it! As it was I lay and trembled and my teeth chattered, and when Mr. C. came and tried me with some water, I could no more swallow it than if I had taken hydrophobia. He had awoke too

Philosopher sits on Nothing

early, and got up to go down stairs and smoke,¹ *his* way of invoking sleep. His room being quite dark, and thinking to put on his stockings and shoes before getting himself a light, he had gone to sit down on a chair at the bottom of his bed, where these articles are kept; but mistaking the locality, he had sat down *on nothing at all!* and fell smack his whole length on the floor,—not hurting himself in the least, for a wonder. This adventure has pretty well taken the conceit out of me on the score of courage, presence of mind, and all that! Mercy! what would have become of Dr. Russell if he had had a Wife who *stood still* and *screamed*, that time when he was so dangerously ill? . . .

Do be so good as give Mr. Dobbie² an emphatic kiss for me; for if Mr. C. become unendurable with his eternal "*Frederick*," I intend running away with Mr. Dobbie!—to the backwoods, or wherever he likes.—God bless you, my dear, kind, *true* woman. Give my love to your Husband.—Yours ever affectionately,

JANE CARLYLE

Have you got the new little dog? I have a whistle for him.

¹ Carlyle was not permitted to smoke in his own bedroom.

² The Rev. Mr. Dobbie (Mrs. Russell's Father), then in his 80th year.

VI

“RICH EYES”

Edward FitzGerald rejoices in Frederic Tennyson's
great cricket match ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE, *March 26, 1841*






MY DEAR THOMPSON,—I had a long letter from Morton the other day—he is still luxuriating at Venice. Also a letter from Frederic Tennyson, who has been in Sicily, etc., and is much distracted between enjoyment of those climates and annoyance from Fleas. These two men are to be at Rome together soon ; so if any one wants to go to Rome, now is a good time. I wish I was there.

F. Tennyson says that he and a party of Englishmen fought a cricket match with the crew of the *Bellerophon* on the *Parthenopæan hills* (query about the correctness of this—I quote from memory), and *sacked* the sailors by 90 runs.

Is not this pleasant?—the notion of good English blood striving in worn-out Italy. I like that such men as Frederic should be abroad : so strong, haughty and passionate. They keep up the English character abroad. . . .

Antidotes to Carlyle

Have you read poor Carlyle's raving book about heroes? Of course you have or I would ask you to buy my copy. I don't like to live with it in the house. It smoulders. He ought to be laughed at a little. But it is pleasant to retire to the *Tale of a Tub*, *Tristram Shandy*, and *Horace Walpole*, after being tossed on his canvas waves. This is blasphemy. Dibdin Pitt of the Coburg could enact one of his heroes. . . .

The Rev. Sydney Smith describes his adventures to
his daughter     


December 11, 1835

MY DEAREST CHILD,—Few are the adventures of a Canon travelling gently over good roads to his benefice. In my way to Reading, I had, for my companion, the Mayor of Bristol when I preached that sermon in favour of the Catholics. He recognised me, and we did very well together. I was terribly afraid that he would stop at the same inn, and that I should have the delight of his society for the evening; but he (thank God!) stopped at the Crown, as a loyal man, and I, as a rude one, went on to the Bear. Civil waiters, wax candles, and off again the next morning, with my friend and Sir W. W——, a very shrewd, clever, coarse, entertaining man, with whom I skirmished *à l'aimable* all the way to Bath. At Bath, candles still more waxen, and waiters still more profound. Being, since my travels, very much gallicised in my character, I ordered a pint of claret; I found it incomparably the best wine I ever tasted; it disappeared with a rapidity which surprises me even at this distance of time. The next morning, in the coach by eight, with a handsome valetudinarian lady,

Boz in Dublin

upon whom the coach produced the same effect as a steam-packet would do. I proposed weak warm brandy and water ; she thought, at first, it would produce inflammation of the stomach, but presently requested to have it warm and *not* weak, and she took it to the last drop, as I did the claret. All well here. God bless you, dearest child ! Love to Holland.

SYDNEY SMITH

Charles Dickens meets a small Irish boy  

(To Miss Hogarth)

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN

Wednesday, August 25, 1858

I BEGIN my letter to you to-day, though I don't know when I may send it off. We had a very good house last night. For "Little Dombey," this morning, we have an immense stall let—already more than two hundred—and people are now fighting in the agent's shop to take more. They were a highly excitable audience last night, but they certainly did not comprehend—internally and intellectually comprehend—"The Chimes" as a London audience do. I am quite sure of it. I very much doubt the Irish capacity of receiving the pathetic ; but of their quickness as to the humorous there can be no doubt. I shall see how they go along with little Paul, in his death, presently.

We meant, as I said in a letter to Katie, to go to Queenstown yesterday and bask on the seashore. But there is always so much to do that we couldn't manage it after all. We expect a tremendous house to-morrow night as well as to-day. I have become a wonderful Irishman—must play an Irish part some day—and

Arthur's Eccentricities

Arthur's only relaxation is when I enact "John and the Boots," which I consequently do enact all day long. The papers are full of remarks upon my white tie, and describe it as being of enormous size, which is a wonderful delusion, because, as you very well know, it is a small tie. Generally, I am happy to report, the Emerald press is in favour of my appearance, and likes my eyes. But one gentleman comes out with a letter at Cork, wherein he says that although only forty-six I look like an old man. *He* is a rum customer, I think.

John has given it up altogether as to rivalry with the Boots, and did not come into my room this morning at all. Boots appeared triumphant and alone. He was waiting for me at the hotel-door last night. "Whaa't sart of a hoose, sur?" he asked me. "Capital." "The Lard be praised fur the 'onor o' Dooblin!"

Arthur buys bad apples in the street and brings them home and doesn't eat them, and then I am obliged to put them in the balcony because they make the room smell faint. Also he meets countrymen with honeycomb on their heads, and leads them (by the button-hole when they have one) to this gorgeous establishment, and requests the bar to buy honeycomb for his breakfast; then it stands upon the sideboard uncovered and the flies fall into it. He buys owls, too, and castles, and other horrible objects, made in bog-oak; and he is perpetually snipping pieces out of newspapers and sending them all over the world. While I am reading, he conducts the correspondence, and his great delight is to show me seventeen or eighteen letters when I come, exhausted, into the retiring-place.

Berry has not got into any particular trouble for forty-eight hours, except that he is all over boils. I have prescribed the yeast, but ineffectually. It is indeed a

Young Ireland and the Inimitable

sight to see him and John sitting in pay-boxes, and surveying Ireland out of pigeon-holes.

Same evening before bedtime

Everybody was at "Little Dombey" to-day, and although I had some little difficulty to work them up in consequence of the excessive crowding of the place, and the difficulty of shaking the people into their seats, the effect was unmistakable and profound. The crying was universal, and they were extraordinarily affected. There is no doubt we could stay here a week with that one reading, and fill the place every night. Hundreds of people have been there to-night, under the impression that it would come off again. It was a most decided and complete success.

Here follows a dialogue (but it requires imitation), which I had yesterday morning with a little boy of the house—landlord's son, I suppose—about Plorn's age. I am sitting on the sofa writing, and find him sitting beside me.

Inimitable. Holloa, old chap.

Young Ireland. Hal-loo!

Inimitable (in his delightful way). What a nice old fellow you are. I am very fond of little boys.

Young Ireland. Air yer? Ye'r right.

Inimitable. What do you learn, old fellow?

Young Ireland (very intent on Inimitable, and always childish, except in his brogue). I lairn wureds of three sillibils, and wureds of two sillibils, and wureds of one sillibil.

Inimitable (gaily). Get out, you humbug! You learn only words of one syllable.

Young Ireland (laughs heartily). You may say that it is mostly wureds of one sillibil.

“Them two old Paddies”

Inimitable. Can you write?

Young Ireland. Not yet. Things comes by deegrays.

Inimitable. Can you cipher?

Young Ireland (very quickly). Wha’at’s that?

Inimitable. Can you make figures?

Young Ireland. I can make a nought, which is not asy, being roond.

Inimitable. I say, old boy, wasn’t it you I saw on Sunday morning in the hall, in a soldier’s cap? You know—in a soldier’s cap?

Young Ireland (*cogitating deeply*). Was it a very good cap?

Inimitable. Yes.

Young Ireland. Did it fit unkommon?

Inimitable. Yes.

Young Ireland. Dat was me!

There are two stupid old louts at the room, to show people into their places, whom John calls “them two old Paddies,” and of whom he says, that he “never see nothing like them (snigger) hold idiots” (snigger). They bow and walk backwards before the grandees, and our men hustle them while they are doing it.

We walked out last night, with the intention of going to the theatre; but the Piccolomini Establishment (they were doing the *Lucia*) looked so horribly like a very bad jail, and the Queen’s looked so blackguardly, that we came back again, and went to bed. I seem to be always either in a railway carriage, or reading, or going to bed. I get so knocked up, whenever I have a minute to remember it, that then I go to bed as a matter of course. I am looking forward to the last Irish reading on Thursday, with great impatience. But when we shall have turned this week, once knocked off Belfast, I shall see

Down a Copper Mine

land, and shall (like poor Timber in the days of old)
"keep up a good heart."

Ever, my dearest Georgy, most affectionately.

Shirley Brooks extols Cornwall to Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A.

ESPLANADE, PENZANCE

Saturday, September 21, 1867

MY DEAR COTTLE,—“Behold ’em ’ere!” “’Ere” is not Penzance, but Ilfracombe, Devonshire. The above represents feebly (I am now critical in art, for I have got the very house occupied last year by Tom Taylor) the stunning hotel at Penzance where we were exceedingly comfortable for some days, and whence we made “excrescences” to the Land’s End and other wonderful works of nature. “It is a holy thing,” said Mr. Squeers, “to be in a state of nature.”

This reminds me that we went down a copper mine, half a mile under the sea, by a wire rope tied to a car about as big as a coal-scuttle—a sensation!—but a previous sensation was reading in the guide-book, “Before descending you must divest yourself of every article of apparel, and——” Here I closed the book, and put it away as S—b—ian; but learning that you could compromise by taking off your coat and tucking up your trousers, and putting on a miner’s dress, white, splashed with yellow mud, I reconsidered the subject. You should have seen Mrs. Shirley in a long white thing like a vast nightgown, and with a thick yellow dreadnought! But she did the perilous descent gallantly, commending her soul to the supreme powers, and the splashes through the crevices to the devil (I believe).

The Duke of Cornwall, Plymouth, is a splendid new

Cornish Phenomena

hotel, with all the comforts, and close to the train. We did all the sights, including the Breakwater, which is not worth doing. But the coast scenery of both Cornwall and Devon is glorious. Very likely I am telling you what you know, for Reynolds was born in Devonshire, and you might have been born anywhere you chose. We have done an awful lot, and I am glad to have got to a resting-place for a week in this love-ley place. We are on the top of a high hill, and see Lundy Isle, Wales, Jerusalem, and Madagascar ; and to-day we are going to have squab-pie and junket.

From Du Maurier I glean that you are all a happy colony ; and I hope to see you after we get back. At Helston there were two pictures, regarded as household treasures. One was "Coming of Age," and the other the "Sports in the Olden Time." I obtained much *kudos* by saying that I knew the painter—that I had stood for the young heir ; and the grandad in the other was Spurgeon, to whom *I* had introduced you when you persuaded him to sit to you. This will become a Cornish legend. At Plymouth Station there is a three-legged cat,—not a Manx cat (good), but one whose leg was cut off by a railway-engine. This is the most remarkable thing I have seen, except the Devil's Bellows at Kinance Bay, which is more remarkable ; but I do not know why.

I have had my hair cut by a barber called Petherwick Peninluma, and I have had my old shoes mended for 1s. 9d. and they are more comfortable than my new ones, which cost a guinea. Such, my Cottle, is a lesson that should teach us, how little real value there is in money, on which, moreover, Providence sets no store, or He would not bestow it on the unworthy, like — ; but no matter, I am in charity with all mankind. My address is 5, Castle Terrace, Ilfracombe. Give us a hail ! My

Shirley Brooks's Good Joke

wife says I have taken her "out of the world." She eats well, however, for an angel.— Ever faithfully yours,

SHIRLEY BROOKS

I made a good joke. We had struggled up a steep mountain, and I rested at a tree, and asked "why it was like a hospital counterpane." They gave it up with abuse. "Because it's on the top of the 'ill." Wit, you see, does not depend upon locality.

Charles Lamb at the Lakes ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

LONDON, *September 24*, 1802

MY DEAR MANNING,—Since the date of my last letter I have been a traveller. A strong desire seized me of visiting remote regions. My first impulse was to go and see Paris. It was a trivial objection to my aspiring mind, that I did not understand a word of the language, since I certainly intend some time in my life to see Paris, and equally certainly never intend to learn the language; therefore that could be no objection. However, I am very glad I did not go, because you had left Paris (I see) before I could have set out. I believe, Stoddart promising to go with me another year prevented that plan. My next scheme (for to my restless, ambitious mind London was become a bed of thorns) was to visit the far-famed Peak in Derbyshire, where the Devil sits, they say, without breeches. *This* my purer mind rejected as indelicate. And my final resolve was a tour to the Lakes. I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice; for my time being precious did not admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show

“Fine old fellows, Skiddaw, etc.”

us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, etc. etc. We thought we had got into fairyland. But that went off (as it never came again—while we stayed we had no more fine sunsets); and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight before, nor do I suppose I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw, etc. I never shall forget ye, how ye lay about that night, like an intrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed for the night, but promising that ye were to be seen in the morning. Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study; which is a large, antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Æolian harp, and an old sofa, half-bed, etc. And all looking out upon the last fading view of Skiddaw and his broad-breasted brethren: what a night! Here we stayed three full weeks, in which time I visited Wordsworth's cottage, where we stayed a day or two with the Clarksons (good people and most hospitable, at whose house we tarried one day and night), and saw Lloyd. The Wordsworths were gone to Calais. They have since been in London and passed much time with us: he is now gone into Yorkshire to be married. So we have seen Keswick, Grasmere, Ambleside, Ulswater (where the Clarksons live), and a place at the other end of Ulswater—I forget

Lamb discovers the Romantic

the name—to which we travelled on a very sultry day, over the middle of Helvellyn. We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw, and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself, that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before: they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired, when she got about half-way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill (than which nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones), and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water she surmounted it most manfully. Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about, and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like a mountain, I am sure, in my life. But I am returned (I have now been come home near three weeks—I was a month out), and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers without being controlled by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*. I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet-Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than among Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year—two, three years—among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet-Street at the

A Diabolical Resolution

end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. My habits are changing, I think : *i.e.* from drunk to sober. Whether I shall be happier or not remains to be proved. I shall certainly be more happy in a morning ; but whether I shall not sacrifice the fat, and the marrow, and the kidneys, *i.e.* the night, the glorious care-drowning night, that heals all our wrongs, pours wine into our mortifications, changes the scene from indifferent and flat to bright and brilliant !—O Manning, if I should have formed a diabolical resolution, by the time you come to England, of not admitting any spirituous liquors into my house, will you be my guest on such shameworthy terms ? Is life, with such limitations, worth trying ? The truth is, that my liquors bring a nest of friendly harpies about my house, who consume me. This is a pitiful tale to be read at St. Gothard ; but it is just now nearest my heart. Fenwick is a ruined man. He is hiding himself from his creditors, and has sent his wife and children into the country. Fell, my other drunken companion (that has been : *nam hic cæstus artemque repono*), is turned editor of a “Naval Chronicle.” Godwin (with a pitiful artificial wife) continues a steady friend, though the same facility does not remain of visiting him often. That Bitch has detached Marshall from his house, Marshall the man who went to sleep when the *Ancient Mariner* was reading : the old, steady, unalterable friend of the Professor. Holcroft is not yet come to town. I expect to see him, and will deliver your message. How I hate *this part* of a letter. Things come crowding in to say, and no room for ’em. Some things are too little to be told, *i.e.* to have a preference ; some are too big and circumstantial. Thanks for yours, which was most delicious. Would I had been with you, benighted etc.

Oliver Goldsmith Arrested

I fear my head is turned with wandering. I shall never be the same acquiescent being. Farewell ; write again quickly, for I shall not like to hazard a letter, not knowing where the fates have carried you. Farewell, my dear fellow.

C. LAMB

Oliver Goldsmith instructs his Uncle Contarine in
Dutch manners ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

LEYDEN [1754]

DEAR SIR,—I suppose by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, Sir, when I say, that till now I had not an opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden ; but of my journey hither you must be informed. Some time after the receipt of your last, I embarked for Bordeaux, on board a Scotch ship called the *St. Andrews*, Capt. John Wall, master. The ship made a tolerable appearance, and as another inducement, I was let to know that six agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea when a storm drove us into a city of England called Newcastle-on-Tyne. We all went ashore to refresh us after the fatigue of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore, and on the following evening as we were all very merry, the room door bursts open : enters a sergeant and twelve grenadiers with their bayonets screwed ; and puts all under king's arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I

A Wanderer in Holland

could to prove my innocence ; however, I remained in prison with the rest a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear Sir, keep this all a secret, or at least say it was for debt ; for if it were once known at the University, I should hardly get a degree. But hear how Providence interposed in my favour ; the ship was gone on to Bordeaux before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland. I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God, I arrived safe at Rotterdam ; whence I travelled by land to Leyden ; and whence I now write.

You may expect some account of this country, and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet shall I endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprises me more than the books every day published, descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels, visits the countries he intends to describe ; passes through them with as much inattention as his *valet de chambre* ; and consequently not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before. The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times ; he in everything imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps exactly what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature. Upon a head of lank

Dutch Women and Scotch

hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat laced with black ribbon : no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pairs of breeches ; so that his hips reach almost up to his arm-pits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite ? Why, she wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace : for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, Sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with cones in it, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats ; and at this chimney dozing Strephon lights his pipe.

I take it that this continual smoking is what gives the man the ruddy healthful complexion, by drawing his superfluous moisture, while the woman, deprived of this amusement, overflows with such viscidities as tint the complexion, and give that paleness of visage which low fenny grounds and moist air conspire to cause. A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition.

The one pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy : the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty ; but must say, that of all objects on earth, an English farmer's daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable. Their pleasures here are very dull, though very various. You may smoke, you may doze ; you may go to the Italian Comedy, as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in Harlequin, who is generally a magician, and in consequence of his diabolical art performs a

Mixed Canal Company

thousand tricks on the credulity of the persons of the Drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour, when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. It was not his face they laughed at, for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword, that neither I, nor you, Sir, were you there, could see.

In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skating, are at that time the reigning amusements.

They have boats here that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they spread all their sails they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid the eye can hardly accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty; wherever I turn my eye, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottos, vistas, presented themselves; but when you enter their towns you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here; every one is usefully employed.

Scotland and this country bear the highest contrast. There hills and rocks intercept every prospect: here 'tis all continued plain. There you might see a well dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close; and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch

A Dutchman in his House

may be compared to a tulip planted in dung ; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox. Physic is by no means taught here so well as in Edinburgh ; and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessities being so extremely dear, and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted,) that we don't much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be ; however I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madame Diallyon's at Leyden.

Thou best of men, may Heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

John Keats describes Winchester



WINCHESTER, *September 22, 1819*

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,— I was very glad to hear from Woodhouse that you would meet in the country. I hope you will pass some pleasant time together. Which I wish to make pleasanter by a brace of letters, very highly to be estimated, as really I have had very bad luck with this sort of game this season. I “kepen in solitarinesse,” for Brown has gone a-visiting. I am surprised myself at the pleasure I live alone in. I can give you no news of the place here, or any other idea of it but what I have to this effect written to George.

Yesterday I say to him was a grand day for Winchester.

They elected a Mayor. It was indeed high time the place should receive some sort of excitement.

There was nothing going on : all asleep : not an old

Discreet Winchester

maid's sedan returning from a card-party : and if any old women got tipsy at Christenings they did not expose it in the streets. The first night tho' of our arrival here there was a slight uproar took place at about ten o' the Clock.

We heard distinctly a noise patting down the High Street as of a walking cane of the good old Dowager breed ; and a little minute after we heard a less voice observe, " What a noise the ferril made—it must be loose."

Brown wanted to call the constables, but I observed it was only a little breeze, and would soon pass over.

The side streets here are excessively maiden-ladylike : the door-steps always fresh from the flannel.

The knockers have a staid, serious, nay almost awful quietness about them. I never saw so quiet a collection of Lions' and Rams' heads.

The doors are most part black, with a little brass handle just above the keyhole, so that in Winchester a man may very quietly shut himself out of his own house. How beautiful the season is now—How fine the air—a temperate sharpness about it. Really, without joking, chaste weather—Dian skies—I never liked stubble-field so much as now—Aye better than the chilly green of the Spring. Somehow, a stubble-field looks warm—in the same way that some pictures look warm.

This struck me so much in my Sunday's walk that I composed upon it. I hope you are better employed than in gaping after weather. I have been at different times so happy as not to know what weather it was—No, I will not copy a parcel of verses.

I always somehow associate Chatterton with autumn. He is the purest writer in the English Language. He has no French idiom or particles, like Chaucer—'tis genuine English Idiom in English words.

The Prettiest "Ees"

I have given up *Hyperion*—there were too many Miltonic inversions in it—Miltonic verse cannot be written, but in an artful, or rather, artist's humour.

I wish to give myself up to other sensations. English ought to be kept up. It may be interesting to you to pick out some lines from *Hyperion*, and put a mark + to the false beauty proceeding from art, and one || to the true voice of feeling.

Upon my soul 'twas imagination—I cannot make the distinction—Every now and then there is a Miltonic intonation—But I cannot make the division properly. . . .

I shall beg leave to have a third opinion in the first discussion you have with Woodhouse—just half-way, between both. You know I will not give up my argument—In my walk to-day I stoop'd under a railing that lay across my path, and asked myself, "Why I did not get over?" "Because," answered I, "no one wanted to force you under."

I would give a guinea to be a reasonable man—good sound sense—a says what he thinks and does what he says man—and did not take snuff. They say men near death, however mad they may have been, come to their senses. I hope I shall here, in this letter; there is a decent space to be very sensible in; many a good proverb has been in less—nay, I have heard of the statutes at large being changed into the statutes at small and printed for a watch paper. Your sisters, by this time, must have got the Devonshire "ees"—short ees, you know 'em—they are the prettiest ees in the language. O, how I admire the middle-sized, delicate, Devonshire girls of about fifteen. There was one at an inn door holding a quartern of brandy—the very thought of her kept me warm a whole stage—and a sixteen-miler too. "You'll pardon me for being jocular."—Ever your affectionate friend,

JOHN KEATS

Helvellyn and Lodore

John Keats and Charles Brown discover Scotland >

I

(To Thomas Keats)

KESWICK, *June 29, 1818*

MY DEAR TOM,—I cannot make my journal as distinct and actual as I could wish, from having been engaged in writing to George, and therefore I must tell you, without circumstance, that we proceeded from Ambleside to Rydal, saw the waterfalls there, and called on Wordsworth who was not at home, nor was any one of his family. I wrote a note and left it on the mantel-piece.

Thence on we came to the foot of Helvellyn, where we slept, but could not ascend it for the mist.

I must mention that from Rydal we passed Thirlswater, and a fine pass in the Mountains—from Helvellyn we came to Keswick on Derwent Water. The approach to Derwent Water surpassed Windermere—it is richly wooded, and shut in with rich-toned mountains.

From Helvellyn to Keswick was eight miles to breakfast, after which we took a complete circuit of the Lake, going about ten miles, and seeing on our way the Fall of Lowdore.

I had an easy climb among the streams, about the fragments of Rocks, and should have got I think to the summit, but unfortunately I was damped by slipping one leg into a squashy hole.

There is no great body of water, but the accompaniment is delightful; for it oozes out from a cleft in perpendicular Rocks, all fledged with ash and other beautiful trees. It is a strange thing how they got there. At the south end of the Lake the Mountains of Borrowdale are perhaps as fine as anything we have seen.

Skiddaw and Rydal Mount

On our return from this circuit we ordered dinner, and set forth about a mile and a half on the Penrith road, to see the Druid temple. We had a fag up hill, rather too near dinner-time, which was rendered void by the gratification of seeing those aged stones on a gentle rise in the midst of the Mountains, which at that time darkened all around, except at the fresh opening of the Vale of St. John. We went to bed rather fatigued, but not so much so as to hinder us getting up this morning to Mount Skiddaw.

It promised all along to be fair, and we had fagged and tugged nearly to the top, when, at half-past six, there came a Mist upon us, and shut out the view.

We did not, however, lose anything by it; we were high enough without mist to see the coast of Scotland—the Irish Sea—the hills beyond Lancaster—and nearly all the large ones of Cumberland and Westmoreland, particularly Helvellyn and Scawfell.

It grew colder and colder as we ascended, and we were glad, at about three parts of the way, to taste a little rum which the Guide brought with him, mixed, mind ye, with Mountain water.

I took two glasses going and one returning. It is about six miles from where I am writing to the top. So we have walked ten miles before breakfast to-day. We went up with two others, very good sort of fellows. All felt, on arising into the cold air, that same elevation which a cold bath gives one—I felt as if I were going to a Tournament.

Wordsworth's house is situated just on the rise of the foot of Mount Rydal; his parlour-window looks directly down Windermere. I do not think I told you how fine the Vale of Grasmere is, and how I discovered "the ancient woman seated on Helm Crag." We shall pro-

“One Exquisite Mouth”

ceed immediately to Carlisle, intending to enter Scotland on the 1st of July *vid* —.

July 1, 1818. — We are this morning at Carlisle. After Skiddaw, we walked to Ireby, the oldest market town in Cumberland, where we were greatly amused by a country dancing-school holden at the Tun, it was indeed “no new cotillion fresh from France.” No, they kickit and jumpit with mettle extraordinary, and whiskit and friskit, and toed it, and go’d it, and twirl’d it, and whirl’d it, and stamped it, and sweated it, tattooing the floor like mad. The difference between our country dances and these Scottish figures is about the same as leisurely stirring a cup o’ Tea and beating up a batter-pudding.

I was extremely gratified to think that, if I had pleasures they knew nothing of, they had also some into which I could not possibly enter.

I hope I shall not return without having got the Highland fling.

There was as fine a row of boys and girls as you ever saw ; some beautiful faces, and one exquisite mouth.

I never felt so near the glory of Patriotism, the glory of making by any means a country happier.

This is what I like better than scenery. I fear our continued moving from place to place will prevent our becoming learned in village affairs ; we are mere creatures of Rivers, Lakes, and Mountains. Our yesterday’s journey was from Ireby to Wigton, and from Wigton to Carlisle.

The Cathedral does not appear very fine—the Castle is very ancient, and of brick. The City is very various—old white-washed narrow streets—broad red-brick ones more modern—I will tell you anon whether the inside of the cathedral is worth looking at.

In Praise of Burns

It is built of sandy red stone or Brick.

We have now walked 114 miles, and are merely a little tired in the thighs and a little blistered.

We shall ride 38 miles to Dumfries, when we shall linger awhile about Nithsdale and Galloway. I have written two letters to Liverpool. I found a letter from sister George ; very delightful indeed : I shall preserve it in the bottom of my knapsack for you.

The town, the churchyard, and the setting sun,
The Clouds, the trees, the rounded hills all seem,
Though beautiful, cold—strange—as in a dream,
I dreamed, long ago, now new begun,
The short-liv'd, paly summer is but won
From winter's ague, for one hour's gleam ;
Though sapphire - warm, their stars do never beam :
All is cold Beauty ; pain is never done :
For who has mind to relish, Minos-wise,
The real of beauty, free from that dead hue,
Sickly imagination, and sick pride,
Cast wan upon it ! Burns ! with honour due,
I oft have honour'd thee. Great shadow, hide
Thy face ; I sin against thy native skies,

July 2, 1818.—You will see by this sonnet that I am at Dumfries. We have dined in Scotland. Burns's tomb is in the Churchyard corner, not very much to my taste, though on a scale large enough to show they wanted to honour him.

Mrs. Burns lives in this place ; most likely we shall see her to-morrow. This sonnet I have written in a strange mood, half-asleep. I know not how it is, the clouds, the sky, the houses, all seem anti-Grecian and anti-Charlemagnish. I will endeavour to get rid of my prejudices and tell you fairly about the Scotch.

In Devonshire they say, "Well, where be ye going?" Here it is, "How is it wi' yoursel'?" A man on the

“Very Pretty Drink”

Coach said the horses took a Hellish heap o’ drivin’ ; the same fellow pointed out Burns’s tomb with a deal of life—“There ! de ye see it, amang the trees—white, wi’ a roond tap ?” The first well-dressed Scotchman we had any conversation with, to our surprise, confessed himself a Deist. The careful manner of delivering his opinions, not before he had received several encouraging hints from us, was very amusing.

Yesterday was an immense horse-fair at Dumfries, so that we met numbers of men and women on the road ; the women nearly all barefoot, with their shoes and clean stockings in hand, ready to put on and look smart in the towns.

There are plenty of wretched cottages whose smoke has no outlet but by the door. We have now begun upon Whisky, called here “whuskey,”—very smart stuff it is. Mixed like our liquors, with sugar and water, ’tis called toddy ; very pretty drink, and much praised by Burns.

II

MAYBOLE, *July 11, 1818*

MY DEAR REYNOLDS, — We were talking on different and indifferent things when, on a sudden, we turned a corner upon the immediate country of Ayr—the sight was as rich as possible.

I had no Conception that the native place of Burns was so beautiful—the idea I had was more desolate, his “Rigs of Barley” seemed always to me but a few strips of Green on a cold hill—O prejudice ! it was as rich as Devon—I endeavoured to drink in the Prospect, that I might spin it out to you, as the Silkworm makes silk from Mulberry leaves—I cannot recollect it. Besides all the Beauty, there were the mountains of Arran Isle,

Letter-opening Humour

black and huge over the sea. We came down upon everything suddenly—there were in our way the “Bonny Doon,” with the Brig that Tam o’ Shanter crossed, Kirk Alloway, Burns’s Cottage, and the Brigs of Ayr. First we stood upon the Bridge across the Doon; surrounded by every Phantasy of green in Tree, Meadow, and Hill,—the stream of the Doon, as a Farmer told us, is covered with trees “from head to foot”—you know those beautiful heaths so fresh against the weather of a summer’s evening—there was one stretching along behind the trees.

I wish I knew always the humour my friends would be in at opening a letter of mine, to suit it to them as nearly as possible. I could always find an egg-shell for Melancholy, and as for Merriment a Witty humour will turn anything to Account. My head is sometimes in such a whirl in considering the million likings and antipathies of our Moments—that I can get into no settled strain in my Letters. My Wig! Burns and sentimentality coming across you and Frank Floodgate in the office—O Scenery, that thou shouldst be crushed between two Puns!

As for them I venture the rascalliest in the Scotch Region—I hope Brown does not put them punctually in his journal—if he does I must sit on the cutty-stool all next winter.

We went to Kirk Alloway—“a Prophet is no Prophet in his own Country.” We went to the Cottage and took some Whisky. I wrote a sonnet for the mere sake of writing some lines under the roof—they are so bad I cannot transcribe them.

The Man at the Cottage was a great Bore with his Anecdotes—I hate the rascal—his life consists of fuz, fuzzy, fuzziest. He drinks glasses five for the Quarter

Robbie Revealed

and twelve for the hour—he is a mahogany-faced old Jackass who knew Burns. He ought to have been kicked for having spoken to him. He calls himself “a curious old Bitch”—but he is a flat old dog—I should like to employ Caliph Vathek to kick him. O the flummery of a birthplace! Cant! cant! cant!

It is enough to give a spirit the guts-ache. Many a true word, they say, is spoken in jest—this may be because his gab hindered my sublimity: the flat dog made me write a flat sonnet.

My dear Reynolds—I cannot write about scenery and visitings—Fancy is indeed less than a present palpable reality, but it is greater than remembrance—you would lift your eyes from Homer only to see close before you the real Isle of Tenedos—you would rather read Homer afterwards than remember yourself.

One song of Burns’s is of more worth to you than all I could think for a whole year in his native country. His Misery is a dead weight upon the nimbleness of one’s quill. I tried to forget it—to drink Toddy without any Care—to write a merry sonnet; it won’t do—he talked with Bitches—he drank with blackguards, he was miserable. We can see horribly clear, in the works of such a Man, his whole life, as if we were God’s spies. What were his addresses to Jean in the latter part of his life? I should not speak so to you—yet why not—you are not in the same case—you are in the right path, and you shall not be deceived.

I have spoken to you against Marriage, but it was general; the Prospect in those matters has been so blank, that I have not been unwilling to die—I would not now, for I have inducements to Life—I must see my little Nephews in America, and I must see you marry your lovely Wife. My sensations are sometimes deadened

One Imperishable Memory

for weeks together—but believe me I have more than once yearned for the time of your happiness to come, as much as I could for myself after the lips of Juliet.

From the tenor of my occasional rhodomontade in chit-chat, you might have been deceived concerning me on these points—upon my soul, I have been getting more and more close to you, every day, ever since I knew you, and now one of the first pleasures I look to is your happy Marriage—the more, since I have felt the pleasure of loving a sister in law. I did not think it possible to become so much attached in so short a time.

Things like these, and they are real, have made me resolve to have a care of my health—you must be as careful.

The rain has stopped us to-day at the end of a dozen miles, yet we hope to see Loch Lomond the day after to-morrow ;—I will piddle out my information, as Rice says, next winter, at any time when a substitute is wanted for Vingt-un.

We bear the fatigue very well—twenty miles a day in general.

A cloud came over us in getting up Skiddaw—I hope to be more lucky in Ben Lomond—and more lucky still in Ben Nevis.

What I think you would enjoy is poking about Ruins, sometimes Abbey, sometimes Castle.

The short stay we made in Ireland has left few remembrances—but an old woman in a dog-kennel Sedan with a pipe in her Mouth, is what I can never forget—I wish I may be able to give you an idea of her. Remember me to your Mother and Sisters, and tell your Mother how I hope she will pardon me for having a scrap of paper pasted in the Book sent to her.

The Idle Life

I was driven on all sides and had not time to call on Taylor. So Bailey is coming to Cumberland—Well, if you'll let me know where at Inverness, I will call on my return and pass a little time with him. I am glad 'tis not Scotland.

Tell my friends I do all I can for them, that is, drink their healths in Toddy. Perhaps I may have some lines by and by to send you fresh, on your own Letter—Tom has a few to show you.—Your affectionate friend,

JOHN KEATS

Edward FitzGerald on Bedfordshire and the Irish 

BOULGE HALL, *August 14, 1839*

MY DEAR POLLOCK,—I came here only yesterday, and your letter was brought up into my bedroom only this morning. What are you doing at Blinfield? rustivating there for fun with your family, or are there Assizes at such a place? And is the juvenile party you speak of assisting at, one of juvenile depredators? Well, I have been in my dear old Bedfordshire ever since I saw you: lounging in the country, lying on the banks of the Ouse, smoking, eating copious teas (prefaced with beer) in the country pot-houses, and have come mourning here: finding an empty house when I expected a full one, and no river Ouse, and no jolly boy to whistle the time away with. Such are the little disasters and miseries under which I labour: quite enough, however, to make one wish to kill oneself at times.

This all comes of having no occupation or sticking-point: so one's thoughts go floating about in a gossamer way. At least this is what I hear on all sides. So

The Waterford Women

you are going with Monteith's party to Ireland. Well, I think you will have a pleasant trip.

I think I shall probably be in Ireland all September, but far away from your doings.

Not to mention that I shall be on shore and you at sea.

You will go and see the North Coast, which I am anxious to see, and shall not unlikely go too, about the time of the equinoctial gales, when such places should be seen. I love Ireland very much, I don't know why: the country and the people and all are very homogeneous; mournful and humorous somehow: just like their natural music.

Some of Tommy Moore's Irish Ballads (the airs, I mean) are the spirits of the Waterford women made music of. You should see them, Pollock, on a Sunday, as they come from Chapel in their long, blue cloaks. Don't you think that blue eyes and black hair, and especially with long, black eyelashes, have a mystery about them?

This day week a dozen poor fellows who had walked all the way from the county Mayo into Bedfordshire, came up to the door of the Inn where we were fishing, and called for small beer. We made their hearts merry with good ale; and they went off flourishing their sticks, hoping all things, enduring all things, and singing some loose things.

You must contrive to see something of the people when you go to Ireland: I think that is the great part of the fun. You should certainly go some miles in or on an Irish Stage Coach, and also on a jaunting Car. I never saw Wimpole near Cambridge until the other day when I passed it on my way from Bedfordshire. Did you ever go and see it? People always told me it was not worth seeing: which is another reason for







Self-Depreciation

believing nothing people tell one : it is a very noble old Queen Anne's building of red brick, in the way of Hampton Court (not half so fine, but something in that way), looking down two miles of green sward as broad as itself, skirted on each side with fine elms. I did not go inside, but I believe the pictures are well worth seeing. Houses of that style have far more mark and character than Woburn and the modern bastard Grecian. I see they have built a new chapel at Barnwell—of red brick and very well done. I should think Peacock must have done it.

Fancy his being Dean of Barnwell. Cambridge looked very ghastly, and the hard-reading, pale, dwindled students walking along the Observatory road looked as if they were only fit to have their necks wrung. I scorn my nerveless carcase more and more every day—but there's no good in talking.

Farewell, my dear Pollock ; I know this is a very worthless letter : but it is very good of you to write, and I have nothing better to do to-day than to write ever such vapid stuff.

I would ask you if Spedding were still in London, if your Yes or No (never very clamorously uttered by you) could reach me from Binfield. But even then I should not be much the better for the Information.

Lord Byron informs Mr. Hodgson of his daily
routine      

LISBON, *July 16, 1809*

THUS far have we pursued our route, and seen all sorts of marvellous sights, palaces, convents, etc.,—which, being to be heard in my friend Hobhouse's forth-

Portuguese Oaths

coming *Book of Travels*, I shall not anticipate by smuggling any account whatsoever to you in a private and clandestine manner. I must just observe, that the village of Cintra in Estremadura is the most beautiful, perhaps, in the world.

I am very happy here, because I love oranges, and talk bad Latin to the monks, who understand it, as it is like their own, and I goes into society (with my pocket pistols), and I swims in the Tagus all across at once, and I rides on an ass or a mule, and swears Portuguese, and have got a diarrhœa and bites from the mosquitoes. But what of that? Comfort must not be expected by folks that go a-pleasuring. When the Portuguese are pertinacious, I say "Carracho!"—the great oath of the Grandees, that very well supplies the place of "Damme!"—and when dissatisfied with my neighbour, I pronounce him "Ambra di merdo." With these two phrases and a third, "Avra bouro," which signifies, "Get an ass," I am universally understood to be a person of degree and a master of languages. How merrily we lives that travellers be!—if we had food and raiment. But, in sober sadness, anything is better than England, and I am infinitely amused with my pilgrimage, as far as it has gone.

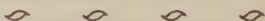
To-morrow we start to ride post near 400 miles as far as Gibraltar, where we embark for Melita and Byzantium. A letter to Malta will find me, or to be forwarded, if I am absent. Pray embrace the Drury and Dwyer, and all the Ephesians you encounter. I am writing with Butler's donative pencil, which makes my bad hand worse. Excuse illegibility.

Hodgson! send me the news, and the deaths and defeats, and capital crimes, and the misfortunes of one's friends; and let us hear of literary matters, and the

The Coliseum

controversies and the criticisms. All this will be pleasant—"Suave, mari magno, etc." Talking of that, I have been sea-sick, and sick of the sea. Adieu.—Yours faithfully, etc.

Shelley in the Coliseum



(To Thomas Love Peacock)

NAPLES, *December 22, 1818*

SINCE I last wrote to you, I have seen the ruins of Rome, the Vatican, St. Peter's, and all the miracles of ancient and modern art contained in that majestic city. The impression of it exceeds anything I have experienced in my travels. We stayed there only a week, intending to return at the end of February, and devote two or three months to its mines of inexhaustible contemplation, to which period I refer you for a minute account of it. We visited the Forum and the ruins of the Coliseum every day. The Coliseum is unlike any work of human hands I ever saw before. It is of enormous height and circuit, and arches built of massy stones are piled on one another, and jut into the blue air shattered into the forms of overhanging rocks. It has been changed by time into the image of an amphitheatre of rocky hills overgrown by the wild olive, the myrtle, and the fig-tree, and threaded by little paths which wind among its ruined stairs and immeasurable galleries; the copse-wood overshadows you as you wander through its labyrinths, and the wild weeds of this climate of flowers bloom under your feet. The arena is covered with grass, and pierces, like the skirts of a natural plain, the chasms of the broken arches around. But a small part of the exterior circumference

Wrecks of Rome

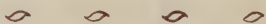
remains ; it is exquisitely light and beautiful, and the effect of the perfection of its architecture, adorned with ranges of Corinthian pilasters, supporting a bold cornice, is such as to diminish the effect of its greatness. The interior is all ruin. I can scarcely believe that when encrusted with Dorian marble and ornamented by columns of Egyptian granite, its effect could have been so sublime and so impressive as in its present state. It is open to the sky, and it was the clear and sunny weather of the end of November in this climate when we visited it, day after day.

Near it is the Arch of Constantine, or rather the Arch of Trajan ; for the servile and avaricious senate of degraded Rome ordered that the monument of his predecessor should be demolished in order to dedicate one to the Christian reptile, who had crept among the blood of his murdered family to the supreme power. It is exquisitely beautiful and perfect. The Forum is a plain in the midst of Rome, a kind of desert full of heaps of stones and pits, and though so near the habitations of men, is the most desolate place you can conceive. The ruins of temples stand in and around it, shattered columns and ranges of others complete, supporting cornices of exquisite workmanship, and vast vaults of shattered domes distinct with regular compartments, once filled with sculptures of ivory or brass. The temples of Jupiter, and Concord, and Peace, and the Sun, and the Moon, and Vesta, are all within a short distance of this spot. Behold the wrecks of what a great nation once dedicated to the abstractions of the mind ! Rome is a city, as it were, of the dead, or rather of those who cannot die, and who survive the puny generations which inhabit and pass over the spot which they have made sacred to eternity. In Rome, at least

The English Cemetery

in the first enthusiasm of your recognition of ancient time, you see nothing of the Italians. The nature of the city assists the delusion, for its vast and antique walls describe a circumference of sixteen miles, and thus the population is thinly scattered over this space, nearly as great as London. Wide wild fields are enclosed within it, and there are lanes and copses winding among the ruins, and a great green hill, lonely and bare, which overhangs the Tiber. The gardens of the modern palaces are like wild woods of cedar and cypress and pine, and the neglected walks are overgrown with weeds. The English burying place is a green slope near the walls, under the pyramidal tomb of Cestius, and is, I think, the most beautiful and solemn cemetery I ever beheld. To see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh, when we first visited it, with the autumnal dews, and hear the whispering of the wind among the leaves of the trees which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius, and the soil which is stirring in the sun-warm earth, and to mark the tombs, mostly of women and young people who were buried there, one might, if one were to die, desire the sleep they seem to sleep. Such is the human mind, and so it peoples with its wishes vacancy and oblivion.

Thomas Gray extols Kent



(To the Rev. Norton Nicholls)

PEMBROKE HALL, *August 26, 1766*

DEAR SIR,—It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness ; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered ; otherwise I had then wrote to you,

“White Transient Sails”

only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life, one never can have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling ! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean), till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but yesterday ; and every day I live, it sinks deeper into my heart. Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it yourself. Pray tell me how your own health is. I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself for a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra-Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably ; the country is all a garden, gay, rich, and fruitful, and (from the rainy season) had preserved, till I left it, all that emerald verdure, which commonly one only sees for the first fortnight of the spring. In the west part of it, from every eminence, the eye catches some long, winding reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their navigation ; in the east, the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This last sentence is so fine, I am quite ashamed ; but, no matter ! you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudding sleeve. I went to Margate for a day ; one would think it was Bartholomew Fair that had *flown* down from Smithfield to Kent in the London Machine, like my Lady Stuffdamask (to be sure you have read the *New Bath Guide*, the most fashionable of books) ; so then I did *not* go to Kingsgate, because it belonged to

An Inquiring P.S.

my Lord Holland, but to Ramsgate I did; and so to Sandwich, and Deal, and Dover, and Folkestone, and Hythe, all along the coast, very delightful. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable, that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by anything but men and women and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again, very disconsolate, and all alone, even Mr. Brown is gone; and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me; I do not mean children. You, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley with Mr. Aislaby, singing duets with my cousin Fanny, improving with Mr. Weddell, conversing with Mr. Harry Duncomb. I must not wish for you here; besides, I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement. Do you remember how we are to go into Wales next year? Well!—Adieu, I am sincerely yours, T. G.

P.S.—Pray how does poor Temple find himself in his new situation? Is Lord Lisburne as good as his letters were? What is come of the father and brother? Have you seen Mason?

The Lambs at Cambridge ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Sarah Hutchinson)

I

Dated at end: August 20, 1815

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is less fatigue to me to write upon lines, and I want to fill up as much of my paper as I can, in gratitude for the pleasure your very kind letter has given me. I began to think I should not hear

News of S. T. C.

from you ; knowing you were not fond of letter-writing, I quite forgave you, but I was very sorry. Do not make a point of conscience of it, but if ever you feel an inclination, you cannot think how much a few lines would delight me. I am happy to hear so good an account of your sister and child, and sincerely wish her a perfect recovery. I am glad you did not arrive sooner, you escaped much anxiety. I have just received a very cheerful letter from Mrs. Morgan—the following I have picked out as I think it will interest you. “Hartley Coleridge has been with us for two months. Morgan invited him to pass the long vacation here in the hope that his father would be of great service to him in his studies : he seems to be extremely amiable. I believe he is to spend the next vacation at Lady Beaumont’s. Your old friend Coleridge is very hard at work at the preface to a new Edition which he is just going to publish in the same form as Mr. Wordsworth’s—at first the preface was not to exceed five or six pages, it has however grown into a work of great importance. I believe Morgan has already written nearly two hundred pages. The title of it is *Autobiographia Literaria* : to which are added *Sybilline Leaves*, a collection of Poems by the same author. Calne has lately been much enlivened by an excellent company of players—last week they performed the ‘Remorse’ to a very crowded and brilliant audience ; two of the characters were admirably well supported ; at the request of the actors Morgan was behind the scenes all the time, and assisted in the music, etc.”

Thanks to your kind interference, we have had a very nice letter from Mr. Wordsworth. Of them and of you we think and talk quite with a painful regret that we did not see more of you, and that it may be so long before we meet again.

Mary Lamb Duplicates

I am going to do a queer thing—I have wearied myself with writing a long letter to Mrs. Morgan, a part of which is an incoherent rambling account of a jaunt we have just been taking. I want to tell you all about it, for we so seldom do such things that it runs strangely in my head, and I feel too tired to give you other than the mere copy of the nonsense I have just been writing.

“Last Saturday was the grand feast day of the India House Clerks. I think you must have heard Charles talk of his yearly turtle feast. He has been lately much wearied with work, and, glad to get rid of all connected with it, he *used* Saturday, the feast day being a holiday, *borrowed* the Monday following, and we set off on the outset of the Cambridge Coach from Fetter Lane at eight o'clock, and were driven into Cambridge in great triumph by Hell Fire Dick five minutes before three. Richard is in high reputation, he is private tutor to the Whip Club. Journeys used to be tedious torments to me, but, seated out in the open air, I enjoyed every mile of the way—the first twenty miles was particularly pleasing to me, having been accustomed to go so far on that road in the Ware Stage Coach to visit my Grandmother in the days of other times.

“In my life I never spent so many pleasant hours together as I did at Cambridge. We were walking the whole time—out of one College into another. If you ask me which I like best, I must make the children's traditionary unoffending reply to all curious enquirers—‘*Both.*’ I liked them all best. The little gloomy ones, because they were little gloomy ones. I felt as if I could live and die in them and never wish to speak again. And the fine grand Trinity College, Oh how fine it was! And King's College Chapel, what a place!

The Friendly Undergrad.

I heard the Cathedral service there, and having been no great church goer of late years, *that* and the painted windows and the general effect of the whole thing affected me wonderfully.

"I certainly like St. John's College best. I had seen least of it, having only been over it once, so, on the morning we returned, I got up at six o'clock and wandered into it by myself—by myself indeed, for there was nothing alive to be seen but one cat, who followed me about like a dog. Then I went over Trinity, but nothing hailed me there, not even a cat.

"On the Sunday we met with a pleasant thing. We had been congratulating each other that we had come alone to enjoy, as the miser his feast, all our sights greedily to ourselves, but having seen all we began to grow flat and wish for this and tother body with us, when we were accosted by a young gownsman whose face we knew, but where or how we had seen him we could not tell, and were obliged to ask his name. He proved to be a young man we had seen twice at Alsager's. He turned out a very pleasant fellow—showed us the insides of places—we took him to our Inn to dinner, and drank tea with him in such a delicious college room, and then again he supped with us. We made our meals as short as possible, to lose no time, and walked our young conductor almost off his legs. Even when the fried eels were ready for supper and coming up, having a message from a man who we had bribed for the purpose, that then we might see Oliver Cromwell, who was *not at home* when we called to see him, we sallied out again and made him a visit by candlelight—and so ended our sights. When we were setting out in the morning our new friend came to bid us good bye, and rode with us as far as Trompington. I never saw

Lamb commencing Gentleman

a creature so happy as he was the whole time he was with us, he said we had put him in such good spirits that [he] should certainly pass an examination well that he is to go through in six weeks in order to qualify himself to obtain a fellowship.

“Returning home down old Fetter Lane, I could hardly keep from crying to think it was all over. With what pleasure [Charles] shewed me Jesus College where Coleridge was—the barbe[r’s shop] where Manning was—the house where Lloyd lived—Franklin’s rooms, a young schoolfellow with whom Charles was the first time he went to Cambridge: I peeped in at his window, the room looked quite deserted—old chairs standing about in disorder that seemed to have stood there ever since they had sate in them. I write sad nonsense about these things, but I wish you had heard Charles talk his nonsense over and over again about his visit to Franklin, and how he then first felt himself commencing gentleman and had eggs for his breakfast.” Charles Lamb commencing gentleman!

A lady who is sitting by me, seeing what I am doing, says I remind her of her husband, who acknowledged that the first love letter he wrote to her was a copy of one he had made use of on a former occasion.

This is no letter, but if you give me any encouragement to write again you shall have one entirely to yourself: a little encouragement will do, a few lines to say you are well and remember us. I will keep this to-morrow, maybe Charles will put a few lines to it—I always send off a humdrum letter of mine with great satisfaction if I can get him to freshen it up a little at the end. Let me beg my love to your sister Johanna with many thanks. I have much pleasure in looking

“ Bless the Little Churches ”

forward to her nice bacon, the maker of which I long have had a great desire to see.

God bless you, my dear Miss Hutchinson, I remain
ever, your affectionate friend, M. LAMB

II

DEAR MISS HUTCHINSON,—I subscribe most willingly to all my sister says of her Enjoyment at Cambridge. She was in silent raptures all the while *there*, and came home riding thro' the air (her 1st long outside journey) triumphing as if she had been *graduated*. I remember one foolish-pretty expression she made use of, “ Bless the little churches how pretty they are,” as those symbols of civilised life opened upon her view, one after the other, on this side Cambridge. You cannot proceed a mile without starting a steeple, with its little patch of villagery round it, enverduring the waste. I don't know how you will pardon part of her letter being a transcript, but writing to another Lady first (probably as the *easiest task*) it was unnatural not to give you an accot of what had so freshly delighted her, and would have been a piece of transcendant rhetoric (above her modesty) to have given two different accounts of a simple and univocal pleasure. Bless me how learned I write ! but I always forget myself when I write to Ladies. One cannot tame one's erudition down to their merely English apprehensions. But this and all other faults you will excuse from yours truly.

C. LAMB

A Poet in the Alps

The Rev. T. E. Brown describes the Jungfrau



(To Mrs. Williamson)

October 18, 1874

OUR three weeks in Switzerland were consummate. No rain, no wind, a perpetual bath of sunshine, hot of course, but at those heights deliciously bracing and stimulating; sunshine that got into your brain and heart, and set you all aglow with a sweet radiant fire I never thought possible for my old jaded *apparatus physicus*. We went by Paris to Neufchatel; thence to Berne, Thun, Interlaken, Lauterbrunnen, Mürren. Here we stayed a week. It was the best part of our holiday; a week never, *never* to be forgotten.

Mürren faces the Jungfrau. This glorious creature is your one object of interest from morning to night. It seems so near that you could fancy a stone might be thrown across to it. Between you and it is a broad valley: but so deep, and with sides so precipitous, that it is entirely out of sight. So the Jungfrau *vis-à-vis*-es you frankly through the bright sweet intervening air. And then she has such moods; such unutterable smiles, such inscrutable sulks, such growls of rage suppressed, such thunder of avalanches, such crowns of stars. One evening our sunset was the real rose pink you have heard of so much. It fades, you know, into a deathlike chalk-white. That is the most *awful* thing. A sort of spasm seems to come over her face, and in an instant she is a corpse, rigid, and oh, so cold! Well, so she died, and you felt as if a great soul had ebbed away into the Heaven of Heavens: and thankful, but very sad, I went up to my room. I was reading by candle-light, for it gets dark immediately after sunset, when A. shrieked

“The Sweet Bright Flora”

to me to come to the window. What a Resurrection—so gentle, so tender—like that sonnet of Milton’s about his dead wife returning in vision ! The moon had risen ; and there was the Jungfrau—oh chaste, oh blessed saint in glory everlasting ! Then all the elemental spirits that haunt crevasses, and hover around peaks, all the patient powers that bear up the rock buttresses, and labour to sustain great slopes, all streams, and drifts, and flowers, and vapours, made a symphony, a time most solemn and rapturous. It was there, unheard perhaps, unheard, I will not deny it ; but there, nevertheless. A young Swiss felt it, and with exquisite delicacy feeling his way, as it were, to some expression, however inadequate, he played a sonata of Schumann, and one or two of the songs, such as the *Frühlingsnacht*. Forgive my rhapsody : but, you know, you don’t get those things twice. And let me say just one word of what followed. The abyss below was a pot of boiling blackness, and on to this, and down into this, and all over this, the moonlight fell as meal falls on to porridge from nimbly sifting fingers. Moon-meal ! that was it.

I climbed the Schilthorn one day before breakfast ; it is about 10,000 feet ; but, as a rule, I didn’t like to leave A. alone ; so that my climbing was of the most limited, and I scarcely got on to ice at all. At Mürren, perhaps more than anywhere else, we had the most astounding richness of pasture. But Switzerland, generally, is in this respect unique. So lush is the vegetation, that it is almost impossible to get up into bare savagery or desolation.

The sweet bright Flora baffles you ; she springs like a bacchante from height to height. You can’t get above her. I don’t mean fat, fulsome richness ; but the pastures are so velvety, so parsemèd with all imaginable

The Brave Optimist

colours. The grass seems to be all flowers, and the flowers to be all grass : the closest-grained math I ever beheld ; and through it everywhere, led by careful hands, go singing, hissing rather, like sharp silver scythes, the little blessed streams. I was not prepared for this.

We got to Chamounix and went up the Flégère, and A. was like a roe upon the mountains ; and every care and every strain of anxiety and bother was wiped from off our souls, and we were both, as we once were, young and full of hope and love. Age and the love shall remain, God wot, but the other things—all right ! all right !

VII

THE LITTLE FRIENDS

William Cowper loses Puss ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To the Rev. John Newton)

August 21, 1780

THE following occurrence ought not to be passed over in silence, in a place where so few notable ones are to be met with.

Last Wednesday night, while we were at supper, between the hours of eight and nine, I heard an unusual noise in the back parlour, as if one of the hares was entangled, and endeavouring to disengage herself. I was just going to rise from table, when it ceased. In about five minutes, a voice on the outside of the parlour door inquired if one of my hares had got away. I immediately rushed into the next room, and found that my poor favourite Puss had made her escape.

She had gnawed in sunder the strings of a lattice work, with which I thought I had sufficiently secured the window, and which I preferred to any other sort of blind, because it admitted plenty of air.

From thence I hastened to the kitchen, where I saw

A Four-Shilling Frolic

the redoubtable Thomas Freeman, who told me that, having seen her, just after she had dropped into the street, he attempted to cover her with his hat, but she screamed out, and leaped directly over his head. I then desired him to pursue as fast as possible, and added Richard Coleman to the chase, as being nimbler, and carrying less weight than Thomas ; not expecting to see her again, but desirous to learn, if possible, what became of her. In something less than an hour, Richard returned, almost breathless, with the following account. That soon after he began to run, he left Tom behind him, and came in sight of a most numerous hunt of men, women, children, and dogs ; that he did his best to keep back the dogs, and presently outstripped the crowd, so that the race was at last disputed between himself and Puss ;---she ran right through the town, and down the lane that leads to Dropshort ; a little before she came to the house, he got the start and turned her ; she pushed for the town again, and soon after she entered it, sought shelter in Mr. Wagstaff's tanyard, adjoining to old Mr. Drake's.

Sturges's harvest men were at supper, and saw her from the opposite side of the way.

There she encountered the tanpits full of water ; and while she was struggling out of one pit, and plunging into another, and almost drowned, one of the men drew her out by the ears, and secured her. She was then well washed in a bucket to get the lime out of her coat, and brought home in a sack at ten o'clock.

This frolic cost us four shillings, but you may believe we did not grudge a farthing of it.

The poor creature received only a little hurt in one of her claws, and in one of her ears, and is now almost as well as ever.

I do not call this an answer to your letter, but such as

Tortoise *Loquitur*

it is I send it, presuming upon that interest which I know you take in my minutest concerns, which I cannot express better than in the words of Terence a little varied—*Nihil mei a te alienum putas.*—Yours, my dear friend,

W. C.

Gilbert White becomes Timothy's autobiographer 

(To his Niece)

SELBORNE, *August 31, 1784*

MOST RESPECTABLE LADY,—Your letter gave me great satisfaction, being the first that I ever was honored with. It is my wish to answer you in my own way ; but I never could make a verse in my life, so you must be contented with plain prose. Having seen but little of this great world, conversed but little, and read less, I feel myself much at a loss how to entertain so intelligent a correspondent. Unless you will let me write about myself, my answer will be very short indeed.

Know, then, that I am an American, and was born in the year 1734, in the province of Virginia, in the midst of a Savanna that lay between a large tobacco plantation and a creek of the sea. Here I spent my youthful days among my relatives with great satisfaction, and saw around me many venerable kinsmen, who had attained great ages, without any interruptions from distempers.

Longevity is so general among our species that a funeral is quite a strange occurrence. I can just remember the death of my great-great-grandfather, who departed this life in the 160th year of his age.

Happy should I have been in the enjoyment of my native climate, and the society of my friends, had not a sea-boy, who was wandering about to see what he could

The Cradle of the Deep

pick up, surprised me as I was sunning myself under a bush ; and whipping me into his wallet, carried me aboard his ship. The circumstances of our voyage are not worth a recital ; I only remember that the rippling of the water against the sides of our vessel as we sailed along was a very lulling and composing sound, which served to soothe my slumbers as I lay in the hold. We had a short voyage, and came to anchor on the coast of England in the harbour of Chichester.

In that city my kidnapper sold me for half-a-crown to a country gentleman, who came up to attend an election. I was immediately packed in a hand-basket, and carried, slung by the servant's side, to their place of abode. As they rode very hard for forty miles, and I had never been on horseback before, I found myself somewhat giddy from my airy jaunt. My purchaser, who was a great humorist, after showing me to some of his neighbours, and giving me the name of Timothy, took little further notice of me ; so I fell under the care of his lady, a benevolent woman, whose humane attention extended to the meanest of her retainers. With this gentlewoman I remained almost forty years, living in a little walled-in court in the front of her house, and enjoying much quiet, and as much satisfaction as I could expect without society.

At last this good old lady died, in a very advanced old age, such as a tortoise would call a good old age ; and I then became the property of her nephew. This man, my present master, dug me out of my winter retreat, and packing me in a deal box, jumbled me eighty miles in post-chaises to my present place of abode. I was sore shaken by this expedition, which was the worst journey I ever experienced. In my present situation I enjoy many advantages—such as the range of an

A Whimsical Naturalist

extensive garden, affording a variety of sun and shade, and abounding in lettuces, poppies, kidney-beans, and many other salubrious and delectable herbs and plants, and especially with a great choice of delicate gooseberries ! But still at times I miss my good old mistress, whose grave and regular deportment suited best with my disposition. For you must know that my master is what they call a *naturalist*, and much visited by people of that turn, who often find him on whimsical experiments, such as feeling my pulse, putting me in a tub of water to try if I can swim, etc., and twice in the year I am carried to the grocer's to be weighed, that it may be seen how much I am wasted during the months of my abstinence, and how much I gain by feasting in the summer. Upon these occasions I am placed in the scale on my back, where I sprawl about to the great diversion of the shopkeeper's children. These matters displease me ; but there is another that much hurts my pride—I mean that contempt shown for my understanding which these *Lords of the Creation* are very apt to discover, thinking that nobody knows anything but themselves. I heard my master say that he expected that I should some day tumble down the ha-ha ; whereas I would have him to know that I can discern a precipice from plain ground as well as himself. Sometimes my master repeats with much seeming triumph the following lines, which occasion a loud laugh—

“ Timotheus, placed on high
Amidst the tuneful choir, .
With flying fingers touched the lyre.”

For my part I see no wit in the application, nor know whence these verses are quoted, perhaps from some prophet of his own, who, if he penned them for the sake

Hardshell's *Wanderjahr*

of ridiculing tortoises, bestowed his pains, I think, to poor purposes. These are some of my grievances ; but they sit very light on me in comparison of what remains behind.


Know, then, tender-hearted lady, that my greatest misfortune, and what I have never divulged to anyone before, is the want of society of my own kind.

This reflection is always uppermost in my own mind, but comes upon me with irresistible force every spring. It was in the month of May last, that I resolved to elope from my place of confinement, for my fancy had represented to me that probably many agreeable tortoises of both sexes might inhabit the heights of Baker's Hill, or the extensive plains of the neighbouring meadows, both of which I could discern from the terrass. One sunny morning, therefore, I watched my opportunity, found the wicket open, eluded the vigilance of Thomas Hoar, and escaped into the St. foin, which began to be in bloom, and thence into the beans. I was missing eight days, wandering in this wilderness of sweets, and exploring the meadows at times. But my pains were all to no purpose ; I could find no society such as I wished and sought for. I began to grow hungry, and to wish myself at home. I therefore came forth into sight, and surrendered myself up to Thomas, who had been inconsolable in my absence. Thus, madam, have I given you a faithful account of my satisfactions and sorrows, the latter of which are uppermost. You are a lady, I understand, of much sensibility. Let me, therefore, make my case your own in the following manner, and then you will judge of my feelings.

Suppose you were to be kidnapped away *to-morrow*, in the bloom of your life, to the land of Tortoises, and were never to see again for fifty years a human face !!! Think on this, dear lady, and pity your sorrowful Reptile,

TIMOTHY

Boz Bereaved

Charles Dickens tells Captain Basil Hall of the death
of his raven     

March 16, 1841

MY raven's dead. He had been ailing for a few days, but not seriously, as we thought, and was apparently recovering, when symptoms of relapse occasioned me to send for an eminent medical gentleman, one Herring (a bird fancier in the New Road), who promptly attended and administered a powerful dose of castor oil. This was on Tuesday last. On Wednesday morning he had another dose of castor oil and a teacupful of warm gruel, which he took with great relish, and under the influence of which he so far recovered his spirits as to be able to bite the groom severely. At 12 o'clock at noon he took several turns up and down the stable with a grave, sedate air, and suddenly reeled. This made him thoughtful. He stopped directly, shook his head, moved on again, stopped once more, cried in a tone of remonstrance and considerable surprise, "Halloa, old girl!" and immediately died. He has left a rather large property (in cheese and halfpence) buried, for security's sake, in various parts of the garden. I am not without suspicions of poison. A butcher was heard to threaten him some weeks since, and he stole a clasp knife belonging to a vindictive carpenter, which was never found. For these reasons, I directed a post-mortem examination preparatory to the body being stuffed; the result of it has not yet reached me. The medical gentleman broke out the fact of his decease to me with great delicacy, observing that "the jolliest queer start had taken place with that 'ere knowing card of a bird, as ever he see'd,"—but the shock was naturally very great. With reference to the jollity of the start, it appears that a raven dying at

Beautiful, Clean, and Sensible

two hundred and fifty or thereabouts, is looked upon as an infant. This one would hardly, as I may say, have been born for a century or so to come, being only two or three years old.

The Swan of Lichfield loses Sappho ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Mr. Newton)

January 16, 1791

I WRITE to you, thus early on the receipt of yours, beneath the impression of a severe shock from the sudden death, in my presence, of my darling little dog, by the breaking, as it is supposed, of the aneurism in her throat, which had never seemed to have given her the least annoyance till the minute in which it destroyed her. Her life had been a three years' rapture, so cloudless had been her health, so gay was her spirit, so agile her light and bounding frame, so pleasurable her keen sensibilities. How I miss her, constant and sweet companion as she was, it is not in every heart to conceive, or, conceiving it, to pity. Giovanni laments her not less fondly ; and her fate left no eye unwet in my little household. Her loss has spread the gloom of silence through this large mansion, so thinly tenanted, that perpetually rung with the demonstrations either of her joy or guardian watchfulness. Her incessant affection for me, her gentleness and perfect obedience, occur hourly to my remembrance, and "thrill my heart with melancholy pain."

My ingenious, learned, and benevolent neighbour, Mr. Green, whose poetic talents are admirable, sent me the ensuing enchanting stanzas, the day after I lost the beautiful, the clean, the sensible, the beloved little creature—

Frequent Tear and Beamy Eyes

(To Miss Seward on the death of her favourite
lap-dog Sappho)

Cease, gentle maid, to shed the frequent tear,
That dims the lustre of thy beamy eyes;
Grief, and her tempting luxuries forbear,
Nor longer heave those unavailing sighs.

Say, shall that heart, with noblest passions warm,
Where friendship and her train delight to rest,
That mind, where sense and playful fancy charm,
By fond extreme of pity sink oppress'd?

What though thy favourite, with her parting breath,
Implor'd thy succour in a piercing yell,
And seem'd to court thy kind regards in death,
As at thy feet, in mortal trance, she fell:

What though, when fate's resistless mandate came,
Thy friendly hand was stretch'd in vain to save,
Yet can that hand bestow a deathless fame,
And plant unfading flowers around her grave.





Then let thy strains in plaintive accents flow,
So shall thy much-loved Sappho still survive
So shall her beauties shine with brighter glow,
And in thy matchless verse for ages live.

Thus, if perchance the splendid amber folds
Some tiny insect in its crystal womb,
While its rare form the curious eye beholds,
The insect shares the glories of its tomb.

Severe has been the breath of this rugged winter ;—I hope it spreads no lasting blight in your domestic comforts. I have been much out of health through its icy progress, and obliged to throw myself upon medical assistance. Within this month my disorder has given way to the skill of my physicians ; but Mr. Saville, the disinterested, the humane, still suffers seizures in his

Tests for Hydrophobia

stomach, of an uncommon, and surely of an alarming nature. Heaven send they may be transient, and, in its mercy, restore to health a life so valuable. Adieu !

Charles Lamb and his dog    

MRS. LEISHMAN'S, CHACE, ENFIELD,
September 1827

DEAR PATMORE,—Excuse my anxiety—but how is Dash? (I should have asked if Mrs. Patmore kept her rules, and was improving—but Dash came uppermost. The order of our thoughts should be the order of our writing.) Goes he muzzled, or *aperto ore*? Are his intellects sound, or does he wander a little in *his* conversation? You cannot be too careful to watch the first symptoms of incoherence. The first illogical snarl he makes, to St. Luke's with him! All the dogs here are going mad, if you believe the overseers; but I protest they seem to me very rational and collected. But nothing is so deceitful as mad people to those who are not used to them. Try him with hot water. If he won't lick it up, it is a sign he does not like it. Does his tail wag horizontally or perpendicularly? That has decided the fate of many dogs in Enfield. Is his general deportment cheerful? I mean when he is pleased—for otherwise there is no judging. You can't be too careful. Has he bit any of the children yet? If he has, have them shot, and keep *him* for curiosity, to see if it was the hydrophobia. They say all our army in India had it at one time—but that was in *Hyder-Ally's* time. Do you get paunch for him? Take care the sheep was sane. You might pull out his teeth (if he would let you), and then you need not mind if he were as mad as a Bedlamite. It

The Profounder Germans

would be rather fun to see his odd ways. It might amuse Mrs. Patmore and the children. They'd have more sense than he ! He'd be like a Fool kept in the family to keep the household in good humour with their own understanding. You might teach him the mad dance set to the mad howl. *Madge Owl-et* would be nothing to him. "My, how he capers !" [*In the margin is written: One of the children speaks this.*]

[*Three lines here are erased.*] What I scratch out is a German quotation from Lessing on the bite of rabid animals ; but, I remember, you don't read German. But Mrs. Patmore may, so I wish I had let it stand. The meaning in English is—"Avoid to approach an animal suspected of madness, as you would avoid fire or a precipice :—" which I think is a sensible observation. The Germans are certainly profounder than we.

If the slightest suspicion arises in your breast, that all is not right with him (Dash), muzzle him, and lead him in a string (common pack-thread will do ; he don't care for twist) to Hood's, his quondam master, and he'll take him in at any time. You may mention your suspicion or not, as you like, or as you think it may wound or not Mr. H.'s feelings. Hood, I know, will wink at a few follies in Dash, in consideration of his former sense. Besides, Hood is deaf, and if you hinted anything, ten to one he would not hear you. Besides, you will have discharged your conscience, and laid the child at the right door, as they say.

We are dawdling our time away very idly and pleasantly at a Mrs. Leishman's, Chace, Enfield, where, if you come a-hunting, we can give you cold meat and a tankard. Her husband is a tailor ; but that, you know, does not make her one. I knew a jailor (which rhymes), but his wife was a fine lady.

Linda and Mrs. Bouncer

Let us hear from you respecting Mrs. Patmore's regimen. I send my love in — to Dash.

C. LAMB

Charles Dickens describes his welcome home



GADS HILL, HIGHAM, BY ROCHESTER, KENT

May 25, 1868

MY DEAR MRS. FIELDS,—As you ask me about the dogs, I begin with them. When I came down first, I came to Gravesend, five miles off. The two Newfoundland dogs, coming to meet me with the usual carriage and the usual driver, and beholding me coming in my usual dress out at the usual door, it struck me that their recollection of my having been absent for any unusual time was at once cancelled. They behaved (they are both young dogs) exactly in their usual manner ; coming behind the basket phaeton as we trotted along, and lifting their heads to have their ears pulled—a special attention which they receive from no one else. But when I drove into the stableyard, Linda (the St. Bernard) was greatly excited ; weeping profusely, and throwing herself on her back, that she might caress my foot with her great fore-paws. Mamie's little dog, too, Mrs. Bouncer, barked in the greatest agitation on being called down and asked by Mamie, "Who is this?" and tore round and round me, like the dog in the Faust outlines. You must know that all the farmers turned out on the road in their market-chaises to say, "Welcome home, sir !" and that all the houses along the road were dressed with flags ; and that our servants, to cut out the rest, had dressed this house so that every brick of it was hidden. They had asked Mamie's permission to "ring the alarm bell" (!) when

Gads Hill's Birds

master drove up, but Mamie, having some slight idea that that compliment might awaken master's sense of the ludicrous, had recommended bell abstinence. But on Sunday the village choir (which includes the bell-ringers) made amends. After some unusually brief pious reflections in the crowns of their hats, at the end of the sermon, the ringers bolted out, and rang like mad until I got home. There had been a conspiracy among the villagers to take the horse out, if I had come to our own station, and draw me here. Mamie and Georgy had got wind of it and warned me.

Divers birds sing here all day, and the nightingales all night. The place is lovely, and in perfect order. I have put five mirrors in the Swiss chalet (where I write), and they reflect and refract in all kinds of ways the leaves that are quivering at the windows, and the great fields of waving corn, and the sail-dotted river. My room is up among the branches of the trees, and the birds and the butterflies fly in and out, and the green branches shoot in, at the open windows, and the lights and shadows of the clouds come and go with the rest of the company. The scent of the flowers, and indeed of everything that is growing for miles and miles, is most delicious.

Dolby (who sends a world of messages) found his wife much better than he expected, and the children (wonderful to relate!) perfect. The little girl winds up her prayers every night with a special commendation to Heaven of me and the pony—as if I must mount him to get there! I dine with Dolby (I was going to write “him,” but found it would look as if I were going to dine with the pony) at Greenwich this very day, and if your ears do not burn from six to nine this evening, then the Atlantic is a non-conductor.

It is time I should explain the otherwise inexplicable

Prayers for the Fields

enclosure. Will you tell Fields, with my love (I suppose he hasn't used *all* the pens yet?), that I think there is in Tremont Street a set of my books, sent out by Chapman, not arrived when I departed. Such set of the immortal works of our illustrious, etc., is designed for the gentleman to whom the enclosure is addressed. If T., F. & Co. will kindly forward the set (carriage paid) with the enclosure to ——'s address, I will invoke new blessings on their heads, and will get Dolby's little daughter to mention them nightly.

"No Thoroughfare" is very shortly coming out in Paris, where it is now in active rehearsal. It is still playing here, but without Fechter, who has been very ill. The doctor's dismissal of him to Paris, however, and his getting better there, enables him to get up the play there. He and Wilkie missed so many pieces of stage-effect here, that, unless I am quite satisfied with his report, I shall go over and try my stage-managerial hand at the Vaudeville theatre.—Ever, my dear Mrs. Fields, your most affectionate friend.

VIII

URBANITY AND NONSENSE

Horace Walpole affects to reprimand Lady Howe ☞

November 10, 1764

SOH! Madam, you expect to be thanked, because you have done a very obliging thing! But I won't thank you, and I won't be obliged. It is very hard one can't come into your house and commend anything, but you must recollect it and send it after one! I will never dine in your house again; and, when I do, I will like nothing; and when I do, I will commend nothing; and when I do, you shan't remember it. You are very grateful indeed to Providence that gave you so good a memory, to stuff it with nothing but bills of fare of what everybody likes to eat and drink! I wonder you are not ashamed—I wonder you are not ashamed! Do you think there is no such thing as gluttony of the memory?—you a Christian! a pretty account you will be able to give of yourself! Your fine folks in France may call this friendship and attention, perhaps, but sure, if I was to go to the devil, it should be for thinking of nothing but myself, not of others, from morning to night. I would send back your temptations,

Borrowing a Waistcoat

but, as I will not be obliged to you for them, verily I shall retain them to punish you ; ingratitude being a proper chastisement for sinful friendliness.—Thine in spirit,

PILCHARD WHITFIELD

Charles Dickens implores the loan of a great tragedian's fancy vest



DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,

Friday Evening, October 17, 1845

MY DEAR MACREADY,—You once—only once—gave the world assurance of a waistcoat. You wore it, sir, I think, in “Money.” It was a remarkable and precious waistcoat, wherein certain broad strips of blue or purple disported themselves as by a combination of extraordinary circumstances, too happy to occur again. I have seen it on your manly chest in private life. I saw it, sir, I think, the other day in the cold light of morning—with feelings easier to be imagined than described. Mr. Macready, sir, are you a father? If so, lend me that waistcoat for five minutes. I am bidden to a wedding (where fathers are made), and my artist cannot, I find (how should he?), imagine such a waistcoat. Let me show it to him as a sample of my tastes and wishes ; and—ha, ha, ha, ha !—eclipse the bridegroom !

I will send a trusty messenger at half-past nine precisely, in the morning. He is sworn to secrecy. He durst not for his life betray us, or swells in ambuscade would have the waistcoat at the cost of his heart's blood.—Thine,

THE UNWAISTCOATED ONE

The Land of Thieves

Charles Lamb brings himself to write to Australia ☺

(To Barron Field)

August 31, 1817

MY DEAR BARRON,—The bearer of this letter so far across the seas is Mr. Lawrey, who comes out to you as a missionary, and whom I have been strongly importuned to recommend to you as a most worthy creature by Mr. Fenwick, a very old, honest friend of mine, of whom, if my memory does not deceive me, you have had some knowledge heretofore as editor of the *Statesman*—a man of talent, and patriotic. If you can show him any facilities in his arduous undertaking, you will oblige us much. Well, and how does the land of thieves use you? and how do you pass your time in your extra-judicial intervals? Going about the streets with a lantern, like Diogenes, looking for an honest man? You may look long enough, I fancy. Do give me some notion of the manners of the inhabitants where you are. They don't thieve all day long, do they? No human property could stand such continuous battery. And what do they do when they an't stealing?

Have you got a theatre? What pieces are performed? Shakespear's, I suppose—not so much for the poetry, as for his having once been in danger of leaving his country on account of certain “small deer.”

Have you poets among you? Cursed plagiarists, I fancy, if you have any. I would not trust an idea or a pocket-handkerchief of mine among 'em. You are almost competent to answer Lord Bacon's problem, whether a nation of atheists can subsist together. You are practically in one:—

“So thievish 'tis, that the eighth commandment itself
Scarce seemeth there to be.”

Distant Correspondents

Our old honest world goes on with little perceptible variation. Of course you have heard of poor Mitchell's death, and that G. Dyer is one of Lord Stanhope's residuaries. I am afraid he has not touched much of the residue yet. He is positively as lean as Cassius. Barnes is going to Demerara or Essequibo, I am not quite certain which. A[lsager] is turned actor. He came out in genteel comedy at Cheltenham this season, and has hopes of a London engagement.

For my own history, I am just in the same spot, doing the same thing (*videlicet*, little or nothing), as when you left me ; only I have positive hopes that I shall be able to conquer that inveterate habit of smoking which you may remember I indulged in. I think of making a beginning this evening, namely, Sunday, 31st August 1817, not Wednesday, 2nd February 1818, as it will be, perhaps, when you read this for the first time. There is the difficulty of writing from one end of the globe (hemispheres I call 'em) to another ! Why, half the truths I have sent you in this letter will become lies before they reach you, and some of the lies (which I have mixed for variety's sake, and to exercise your judgment in the finding of them out) may be turned into sad realities before you shall be called upon to detect them. Such are the defects of going by different chronologies. Your now is not my now ; and again, your then is not my then ; but my now may be your then, and *vice versâ*. Whose head is competent to these things ?

How does Mrs. Field get on in her geography ? Does she know where she is by this time ? I am not sure sometimes you are not in another planet ; but then I don't like to ask Capt. Burney, or any of those that know anything about it, for fear of exposing my ignorance.

Mrs. Johnson's Pick-Axe

Our kindest remembrances, however, to Mrs. F., if she will accept of reminiscences from another planet, or at least another hemisphere.

C. L.

The Dean extemporises to Dr. Sheridan



(To Dr. Sheridan)

January 25, 1724-5

I HAVE a packet of letters, which I intended to send by Molly, who has been stopped three days by the bad weather ; but now I will send them by the post to-morrow to Kells, and enclosed to Mr. Tickell ; there is one to you and one to James Stopford.

I can do no work this terrible weather ; which has put us all seventy times out of patience. I have been deaf nine days, and am now pretty well recovered again.

Pray desire Mr. Stanton and Mr. Worrall to continue giving themselves some trouble with Mr. Pratt ; but let it succeed or not, I hope I shall be easy.

Mrs. Johnson swears it will rain till Michaelmas. She is so pleased with her pick-axe, that she wears it fastened to her girdle on her left side, in balance with her watch. The lake is strangely overflowed, and we are desperate about turf, being forced to lay it three miles off ; and Mrs. Johnson (God help her !) gives you many a curse. Your mason is come, but cannot yet work upon your garden. Neither can I agree with him about the great wall. For the rest, *vide* the letter you will have on Monday, if Mr. Tickell uses you well.

The news of the country is, that the maid you sent down, John Farelly's sister, is married ; but the portion and settlement are yet a secret. The cows here never give milk on Midsummer Eve.

The Servants' Maxim

You would wonder what carking and caring there is among us for small beer and lean mutton, and stewed lamb, and stopping gaps, and driving cattle from the covers. In that we are all-to-be-Dingleyed.

The ladies' room smokes, the rain drops from the skies into the kitchen, our servants eat and drink like the devil, and pray for rain, which entertains them at cards and sleep, which are revels lighter than spades, sledges, and crows. Their maxim is—

Eat like a Turk,
Sleep like a dormouse,
Be last at work,
At victuals foremost.

Which is all at present ; hoping you and your good family are well, as we are all at this present writing, etc.

Robin has just carried out a load of bread and cold meat for breakfast ; this is their way ; but now a cloud hangs over them, for fear it should hold up, and the clouds blow off.

I write on till Molly comes in for the letter. O, what a draggletail she will be before she gets to Dublin ! I wish she may not happen to fall upon her back by the way.

I affirm against Aristotle that cold and rain congregate homogenes, for they gather together you and your crew, at whist, punch, and claret. Happy weather for Mr. Mauls, Betty, and Stopford, and all true lovers of cards and laziness.

BLESSINGS OF A COUNTRY LIFE

Far from our debtors,
No Dublin letters,
Not seen by our betters.

William Cowper's Morning

THE PLAGUES OF A COUNTRY LIFE

A companion with news,
A great want of shoes ;
Eat lean meat, or choose
A church without pews.
Our horses astray,
No straw, oats, or hay
December in May,
Our boys now away,
Our servants at play.

William Cowper looks backward



(To the Rev. John Newton)

February 10, 1784

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The morning is my writing time, and in the morning I have no spirits. So much the worse for my correspondents. Sleep that refreshes my body, seems to cripple me in every other respect.

As the evening approaches, I grow more alert, and when I am retiring to bed, am more fit for mental occupation than at any other time.

So it fares with us whom they call nervous. By a strange inversion of the animal economy, we are ready to sleep when we have most need to be awake, and go to bed just when we might sit up to some purpose.

The watch is irregularly wound up, it goes in the night when it is not wanted, and in the day stands still.

In many respects we have the advantage of our forefathers the Picts. We sleep in a whole skin, and are not obliged to submit to the painful operation of puncturing ourselves from head to foot in order that we may be decently dressed, and fit to appear abroad.

The Happy Picts

But, on the other hand, we have reason enough to envy them their tone of nerves, and that flow of spirits which effectually secured them from all uncomfortable impressions of a gloomy atmosphere, and from every shade of melancholy from every other cause. They understood, I suppose, the use of vulnerary herbs, having frequent occasion for some skill in surgery ; but physicians, I presume, they had none, having no need of any.

Is it possible, that a creature like myself can be descended from such progenitors, in whom there appears not a single trace of family resemblance ?

What an alteration have a few ages made ? They, without clothing, would defy the severest season ; and I, with all the accommodations that art has since invented, am hardly secure even in the mildest.

If the wind blows upon me when my pores are open, I catch cold. A cough is the consequence.

I suppose if such a disorder could have seized a Pict, his friends would have concluded that a bone had stuck in his throat, and that he was in some danger of choking.

They would perhaps have addressed themselves to the cure of his cough by thrusting their fingers into his gullet, which would only have exasperated the case.

But they would never have thought of administering laudanum, my only remedy. For this difference, however, that has obtained between me and my ancestors, I am indebted to the luxurious practices, and enfeebling self-indulgence, of a long line of grandsires, who from generation to generation have been employed in deteriorating the breed, till at last the collected effects of all their follies have centred in my puny self,—a man indeed, but not in the image of those that went before me ;—a man, who sighs and groans, who wears out life in dejection and oppression of spirits, and who never thinks

The Visionary Adam

of the aborigines of the country to which he belongs, without wishing that he had been born among them. The evil is without a remedy, unless the ages that are passed could be recalled, my whole pedigree being permitted to live again, and being properly admonished to beware of enervating sloth and refinement, would preserve their hardiness of nature unimpaired, and transmit the desirable quality to their posterity. I once saw Adam in a dream. We sometimes say of a picture, that we doubt not its likeness to the original, though we never saw him ; a judgment we have some reason to form, when the face is strongly charactered, and the features full of expression.

So I think of my visionary Adam, and for a similar reason. His figure was awkward in the extreme. It was evident that he had never been taught by a Frenchman to hold his head erect, or to turn out his toes ; to dispose gracefully of his arms, or to simper without a meaning. But if Mr. Bacon was called upon to produce a statue of Hercules, he need not wish for a juster pattern. He stood like a rock ; the size of his limbs, the prominence of his muscles, and the height of his stature, all conspired to bespeak him a creature whose strength had suffered no diminution ; and who, being the first of his race, did not come into the world under a necessity of sustaining a load of infirmities, derived to him from the intemperance of others.

He was as much stouter than a Pict, as I suppose a Pict to have been than I. Upon my hypothesis, therefore, there has been a gradual declension, in point of bodily vigour, from Adam down to me ; at least if my dream were a just representation of that gentleman, and deserve the credit I cannot help giving it, such must have been the case.—Yours, my dear friend,

W. C.

Christmas in China

Charles Lamb invents for Manning ♪ ♪ ♪

December 25, 1815

DEAR OLD FRIEND AND ABSENTEE,—This is Christmas-day 1815 with us ; what it may be with you I don't know, the 12th of June next year perhaps ; and if it should be the consecrated season with you, I don't see how you can keep it. You have no turkeys ; you would not desecrate the festival by offering up a withered Chinese bantam, instead of the savoury grand Norfolkian holocaust, that smokes all around my nostrils at this moment from a thousand firesides. Then what puddings have you ? Where will you get holly to stick in your churches, or churches to stick your dried tea-leaves (that must be the substitute) in ? What memorials you can have of the holy time, I see not. A chopped missionary or two may keep up the thin idea of Lent and the wilderness ; but what standing evidence have you of the Nativity ?—'tis our rosy-cheeked, home-stalled divines, whose faces shine to the tune of *Unto us a child* ; faces fragrant with the mince-pies of half a century, that alone can authenticate the cheerful mystery—I feel.

I feel my bowels refreshed with the holy tide—my zeal is great against the unedified heathen. Down with the Pagodas—down with the idols—Ching-chong-fo—and his foolish priesthood ! Come out of Babylon, O my friend ! for her time is come, and the child that is native, and the Proselyte of her gates, shall kindle and smoke together ! And in sober sense what makes you so long from among us, Manning ? You must not expect to see the same England again which you left.

Empires have been overturned, crowns trodden into dust, the face of the western world quite changed : your

A Tissue of Good Lies

friends have all got old—those you left blooming—myself (who am one of the few that remember you) those golden hairs which you recollect my taking a pride in, turned to silvery and grey. Mary has been dead and buried many years—she desired to be buried in the silk gown you sent her. Rickman, that you remember active and strong, now walks out supported by a servant maid and a stick. Martin Burney is a very old man. The other day an aged woman knocked at my door, and pretended to my acquaintance ; it was long before I had the most distant cognition of her ; but at last together we made her out to be Louisa, the daughter of Mrs. Topham, formerly Mrs. Morton, who had been Mrs. Reynolds, formerly Mrs. Kenney, whose first husband was Holcroft, the dramatic writer of the last century. St. Paul's Church is a heap of ruins ; the Monument isn't half so high as you knew it, divers parts being successively taken down which the ravages of time had rendered dangerous ; the horse at Charing Cross is gone, no one knows whither,—and all this has taken place while you have been settling whether Ho-hing-tong should be spelt with a — or a —. For aught I see you had almost as well remain where you are, and not come like a Strulbrug into a world where few were born when you went away. Scarce here and there one will be able to make out your face ; all your opinions will be out of date, your jokes obsolete, your puns rejected with fastidiousness as wit of the last age. Your way of mathematics has already given way to a new method, which after all is, I believe, the old doctrine of Maclaurin, new-vamped up with what he borrowed of the negative quantity of fluxions from Euler.

Poor Godwin ! I was passing his tomb the other day in Cripplegate churchyard. There are some verses

Exaggerated Deaths

upon it written by Miss Hayes, which if I thought good enough I would send you. He was one of those who would have hailed your return, not with boisterous shouts and clamours, but with the complacent gratulations of a philosopher anxious to promote knowledge as leading to happiness—but his systems and his theories are ten feet deep in Cripplegate mould. Coleridge is just dead, having lived just long enough to close the eyes of Wordsworth, who paid the debt to nature but a week or two before. Poor Col., but two days before he died he wrote to a bookseller proposing an epic poem on the "Wanderings of Cain," in twenty-four books. It is said he has left behind him more than forty thousand treatises in criticism and metaphysics, but few of them in a state of completion. They are now destined, perhaps, to wrap up spices. You see what mutations the busy hand of Time has produced, while you have consumed in foolish voluntary exile that time which might have gladdened your friends—benefited your country ; but reproaches are useless. Gather up the wretched reliques, my friend, as fast as you can, and come to your old home. I will rub my eyes and try to recognise you. We will shake withered hands together, and talk of old things—of St. Mary's Church and the barber's opposite, where the young students in mathematics used to assemble. Poor Crisp, that kept it afterwards, set up a fruiterer's shop in Trumpington Street, and for aught I know, resides there still, for I saw the name up in the last journey I took there with my sister just before she died. I suppose you heard that I had left the India House, and gone into the Fishmongers' Almshouses over the bridge. I have a little cabin there, small and homely ; but you shall be welcome to it. You like oysters, and to open them yourself ; I'll get you

Bribing a Dean

some if you come in oyster time. Marshall, Godwin's old friend, is still alive, and talks of the faces you used to make. Come as soon as you can.

C. LAMB

The Dean jests with Miss Hoadly o o o

June 4, 1734

MADAM,—When I lived in England, once every year I issued out an edict, commanding that all ladies of wit, sense, merit, and quality, who had an ambition to be acquainted with me, should make the first advances at their peril; which edict, you may believe, was universally obeyed. When (much against my will) I came to live in this kingdom, I published the same edict; only, the harvest here being not altogether so plentiful, I confined myself to a smaller compass. This made me often wonder how you came so long to neglect your duty; for, if you pretend ignorance, I may produce legal witnesses against you.

I have heard of a judge bribed with a pig, but it was discovered by the squeaking; and, therefore, you have been so politic as to send me a dead one, which can tell no tales. Your present of butter was made with the same design, as a known court practice, to grease my fist that I might keep silence. These are great offences, contrived on purpose to corrupt my integrity. And, besides, I apprehend, that if I should wait on you to return my thanks, you will deny that the pig and butter were any advances at all on your side, and give out that I made them first: by which I may endanger the fundamental privilege, that I have kept so many years

A Dean's Threats

in the kingdom, at least make it a point of controversy. However, I have two ways to be revenged : first, I will let all the ladies of my acquaintance know, that you, the sole daughter and child of his Grace of Dublin, one so mean as to descend to understand housewifery ; which every girl of this town, who can afford sixpence a month for a chair, would scorn to be thought to have the least knowledge in ; and this will give you as ill a reputation as if you had been caught in the act of reading a history, or handling a needle, or working in a field at Tallagh. My other revenge shall be this : when my lord's gentleman delivered his message, after I put him some questions, he drew out a paper containing your directions, and in your hand ; I said it properly belonged to me ; and, when I had read it, I put it in my pocket, and am ready to swear, when lawfully called, that it is written in a fair hand, rightly spelt, and good plain sense. You now may see I have you at mercy ; for, upon the least offence given, I will show the paper to every female scrawler I meet, who will soon spread about the town that your writing and spelling are ungenteel and unfashionable, more like a parson than a lady.




I suppose, by this time, you are willing to submit ; and, therefore, I desire you may stint me to two china bowls of butter a-week ; for my breakfast is that of a sickly man, rice gruel, and I am wholly a stranger to tea and coffee, the companions of bread and butter. I received my third bowl last night, and I think my second is almost entire. I hope and believe my lord archbishop will teach his neighbouring tenants and farmers a little English country management ; and I lay it upon you, madam, to bring housewifery in fashion among our ladies ; that, by your example, they may no

Prose in Verse

longer pride themselves on their natural or affected ignorance.—I am, with the truest respect and esteem, Madam, your most obedient and obliged, etc.,

JON. SWIFT

I desire to present my most etc., to his grace and the ladies.

William Cowper drops into verse   

(To the Rev. John Newton)

July 12, 1781

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am going to send, what when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say, I suppose, there's nobody knows, whether what I have got be verse or not: by the tune and the time, it ought to be rhyme; but if it be, did you ever see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before? The thought did occur to me and to her, as Madam and I, did walk and not fly, over hills and dales, with spreading sails, before it was dark, to Weston Park.

The news at *Oney* is little or noney, but such as it is, I send it, viz.—Poor Mr. Peace cannot yet cease addling his head with what you said, and has left parish-church quite in the lurch, having almost sworn to go there no more.

Page and his wife, that made such a strife, we met them twain in Dog Lane; we gave them the wall, and that was all. For Mr. Scott, we have seen him not, except as he pass'd, in a wonderful haste, to see a friend in Silver End. Mrs. Jones proposes, ere July closes, that she and her sister, and her Jones Mister, and we that are here, our course shall steer to dine in the

Epistolary Champagne

Spinney ; but for a guinea, if the weather should hold so hot and so cold, we had better by far stay where we are. For the grass there grows while nobody mows (which is very wrong) so rank and long, that, so to speak, 'tis at least a week, if it happens to rain, ere it dries again. I have writ Charity, not for popularity, but as well as I could, in hopes to do good ; and if the Reviewer should say "to be sure, the gentleman's Muse wears Methodist shoes ; you may know by her pace, and talk about grace, that she and her bard have little regard for the taste and fashions, and ruling passions, and hoidening play, of the modern day ; and though she assume a borrowed plume, and now and then wear a tittering air, 'tis only her plan to catch if she can the giddy and gay, as they go that way, by a production on a new construction. She has baited her trap in hopes to snap all that may come with a sugar-plum."—

His opinion in this will not be amiss ; 'tis what I intend, my principal end ; and if I succeed, and folks should read, till a few are brought to a serious thought, I shall think I am paid for all I have said and all I have done, though I have run, many a time, after a rhyme, as far as from hence to the end of my sense, and by hook or crook, write another book, if I live and am here, another year. I have heard before, of a room with a floor laid upon springs and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you was forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing ; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay,

Against Tartary

till you come to an end of what I have penn'd ; which that you may do ere Madam and you are quite worn out with jiggling about, I take my leave, and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me—

W. C.

P.S.—When I concluded, doubtless you did think me right, as well you might, in saying what I said of Scott ; and then it was true, but now it is due to him to note, that since I wrote, himself and he has visited we.

Charles Lamb cries out against Tartary



[February 19, 1803]

MY DEAR MANNING,—The general scope of your letter afforded no indications of insanity, but some particular points raised a scruple. For God's sake don't think any more of "Independent Tartary." What have you to do among such Ethiopians? Is there no *lineal descendant* of Prester John?

Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed?—depend upon't they'll never make you their king, as long as any branch of that great stock is remaining. I tremble for your Christianity. They'll certainly circumcise you. Read Sir John Maundevill's travels to cure you, or come over to England. There is a Tartar-man now exhibiting at Exeter Change. Come and talk with him, and hear what he says first. Indeed, he is no very favorable specimen of his Countrymen! But perhaps the best thing you can do, is to *try* to get the idea out of your head. For this purpose repeat to yourself every night, after you have said your prayers, the words Independent Tartary, Independent Tartary, two or three times, and

Chaucer's Darling Things

associate with them the *idea of oblivion* ('tis Hartley's method with obstinate memories), or say, Independent, Independent, have I not already got an *Independence*? That was a clever way of the old puritans—pun-divinity. My dear friend, think what a sad pity it would be to bury such *parts* in heathen countries, among nasty, unconversable, horse-belching, Tartar people! Some say, they are Cannibals; and then conceive a Tartar-fellow *eating* my friend, and adding the *cool malignity* of mustard and vinegar! I am afraid 'tis the reading of Chaucer has misled you; his foolish stories about Cambuscan and the ring, and the horse of brass. Believe me, there's no such things, 'tis all the poet's *invention*; but if there were such *darling* things as old Chaucer sings, I would *up* behind you on the Horse of Brass, and frisk off for Prester John's Country. But these are all tales; a Horse of Brass never flew, and a King's daughter never talked with Birds! The Tartars, really, are a cold, insipid, smouchey set. You'll be sadly moped (if you are not eaten) among them. Pray *try* and cure yourself. Take Hellebore (the counsel is Horace's, 'twas none of my thought *originally*). Shave yourself oftener. Eat no saffron, for saffron-eaters contract a terrible Tartar-like yellow. Pray, to avoid the fiend. Eat nothing that gives the heart-burn. *Shave the upper lip*. Go about like an European. Read no books of voyages (they're nothing but lies): only now and then a Romance, to keep the fancy *under*. Above all, don't go to any sights of *wild beasts*. *That has been your ruin*. Accustom yourself to write familiar letters on common subjects to your friends in England, such as are of a moderate understanding. And think about common things more. There's your friend Holcroft now has written a play. You used to be fond of the drama. Nobody went to

Shakespeare the Gentleman

see it Notwithstanding this, with an audacity perfectly original, he faces the town down in a preface, that they *did like* it very much. I have heard a waspish punster say, "Sir, why did you not laugh at my jest?" But for a man boldly to face me out with, "Sir, I maintain it, you did laugh at my jest," is a little too much. I have seen H. but once. He spoke of you to me in honorable terms. H. seems to me to be drearily dull. Godwin is dull, but then he has a dash of affectation, which smacks of the coxcomb, and your coxcombs are always agreeable. I supped last night with Rickman, and met a merry *natural* captain, who pleases himself vastly with once having made a Pun at Otaheite in the O. language. 'Tis the same man who said Shakspeare he liked, because he was so *much of the Gentleman*. Rickman is a man "absolute in all numbers." I think I may one day bring you acquainted, if you do not go to Tartary first; for you'll never come back. Have a care, my dear friend, of Anthropophagi! their stomachs are always craving. But if you do go among [them] pray contrive to *stink* as soon as you can that you may [? not] hang a [? on] hand at the Butcher's. 'Tis terrible to be weighed out for 5d. a-pound. To sit at table (the reverse of fishes in Holland), not as a guest, but as a meat.

God bless you: do come to England. Air and exercise may do great things. Talk with some Minister. Why not your father?

God dispose all for the best. I have discharged my duty.—Your sincere fr^d,
C. LAMB

The "Crissmiss" Dinner

W. M. Thackeray thanks a friend for two geese 0

(Now for the first time published)

36 ONSLOW SQUARE, *December 27, 18—*

DEAR CARTER,—I should be an ungrateful wretch if I didn't tell you that the geese were excellent. The servants polished theirs entirely off; and ours was admired and appreciated by everybody who partook thereof. I carved it, and I need not say some of the best slices of the bosom were appropriated to yours gratefully,

W. M. THACKERAY

[Here a drawing of geese on a common]

HYMN THE FIRST

The housewives of a former age
Were wont to stuff a Goose with sage.
You put the Bird to nobler use,
Carter! and stuff a Sage with goose.

HYMN THE SECOND

"Lawk, Miss Anny, Lawk, Miss Minny!" thus cries Gray
the cook,
"Two such beautiful geese is come! Only come and look!
"Lor, how plump and brown they'll be! Lor, how plump
and juicy!
Well, of hall things I declare I do love a goosey!
"Two fat geese, how genteel! Only think of this, miss!
Don't they come convenient for the dinner at Crissmiss!
"One shall be for the Servants' 'All, and one for the parlour
arter,
And I never shall see a goose again, without thinking of Mr
Carter."

A Sporting Offer

"That I won't," says Mrs. Gray the cook, with her duty, and
the best compliments of the season.
And the same she hopes *nex year*.




[*Here a boy standing on his head, with "Turn over"*
written beneath]

On second thoughts, and in allusion to a painful
transaction last year :

No, this pun is so dreadfully bad,
I think I never can, sir,
But when a man sends me

A goose and a deuced kind letter, I think I might send him
an *anser*.

Well, I will next year, that's all I have to say.

Robert Louis Stevenson offers to exchange bodies
with Cosmo Monkhouse   

LA SOLITUDE, HYÈRES, *April 24, 1884*

DEAR MONKHOUSE,—If you are in love with
repose, here is your occasion : change with me.
I am too blind to read, hence no reading ; I am too
weak to walk, hence no walking ; I am not allowed to
speak, hence no talking ; but the great simplification
has yet to be named ; for, if this goes on, I shall soon
have nothing to eat—and hence, O Hallelujah ! hence
no eating. The offer is a fair one : I have not sold
myself to the devil, for I could never find him. I am
married, but so are you. I sometimes write verses, but
so do you ! Come ! *Hic quies !* As for the command-
ments, I have broken them so small that they are the

Well-mannered Remorses

dust of my chambers ; you walk upon them, triturate and toothless ; and with the Golosh of Philosophy, they shall not bite your heel. True, the tenement is falling. Ay, friend, but yours also. Take a larger view ; what is a year or two ? dust in the balance ! 'Tis done, behold you Cosmo Stevenson, and me R. L. Monkhouse ; you at Hyères, I in London ; you rejoicing in the clammiest repose, me proceeding to tear your tabernacle into rags, as I have already so admirably torn my own.

My place to which I now introduce you—it is yours—is like a London house, high and very narrow ; upon the lungs I will not linger ; the heart is large enough for a ballroom ; the belly greedy and inefficient ; the brain stocked with the most damnable explosives, like a dynamiter's den. The whole place is well furnished, though not in a very pure taste ; Corinthian much of it ; showy and not strong.

About your place I shall try to find my way alone, an interesting exploration. Imagine me, as I go to bed, falling over a blood-stained remorse ; opening that cupboard in the cerebellum and being welcomed by the spirit of your murdered uncle. I should probably not like your remorsees ; I wonder if you will like mine ; I have a spirited assortment ; they whistle in my ear o' nights like a north-easter. I trust yours don't dine with the family ; mine are better mannered ; you will hear nought of them till 2 a.m., except one, to be sure, that I have made a pet of, but he is small ; I keep him in buttons, so as to avoid commentaries ; you will like him much—if you like what is genuine.




Must we likewise change religions ? Mine is a good article, with a trick of stopping ; cathedral bell note ; ornamental dial ; supported by Venus and the Graces ;

The Pigtail

quite a summer-parlour piety. Of yours, since your last, I fear there is little to be said.

There is one article I wish to take away with me : my spirits. They suit me. I don't want yours ; I like my own ; I have had them a long while in bottle. It is my only reservation.—Yours (as you decide),

R. L. MONKHOUSE

An able-bodied seaman asks his brother to be sure to
get him a creature comfort   

Warren Hastings

EAST INDIANMAN, OFF GRAVESEND

March 24

DEAR BRO' TOM,—This cums hopein to find you in good helth as it leaves me safe ankord here yesterday at 4 p.m., arter a plesent vyage tolerable short and few squalls. Dear Tom, hopes to find poor old father stout. Am quite out of pigtail. Sights of pigtail at Gravesend but unfortinly not fit for a dogtochor. Dear Tom, Captains boy will bring you this and put pigtail in his pocket when bort. Best in London at the black boy 7 diles where go, ax for best pigtail, pound a pigtail will do. And am short of shirts. Dear Tom, as for shirts onley took 2, whereof 1 is quite wore out and tother most, but don't forget the pigtail as I arnt had here a quid to chor never sins Thursday. Dear Tom as for the shirts your size will do only longer. I likes um long, got one at present, best at Tower hill and cheap, but be pertickler to go to 7 diles for the pigtail, at the black boy and dear Tom ax for a pound of best pigtail and let it be good. Captains boy will put the pigtail in his pocket, *he likes pigtail so tie it up*. Dear Tom shall

The Polite Boys

be up about Monday or thereabouts. Not so pertickler for the shirts as the present can be washed, but dont forget the pigtail without fail, so am your lovein brother,

JACK

P.S.—Dont forget the pigtail.

Letter from a young gentleman to his companion
recovered from a fit of sickness ∪ ∪ ∪

From an old Manual

IT gives me the most sincere pleasure to hear that my dear Tommy is recovering his health so rapidly. Had you died it would have been to me a most terrible loss ; but it has pleased God to preserve my friend.




I will take the first opportunity that offers to call and tell you how valuable your life is to your sincere friend and playfellow.

Answer

YOUR obliging letter, my dear Billy, is a fresh proof of your friendship and esteem for me. I thank God I am now perfectly recovered. I am in some doubt whether I ought not to consider my late illness as a just punishment for my crime of robbing Mr. Goodman's orchard, breaking his boughs and spoiling his hedges. However I am fully determined that evermore no such complaints shall come against your sincere friend and playfellow.

IX

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

Thomas Carlyle tells all the news   

I

(To Dr. Carlyle, Naples)

CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA, LONDON, *June 17, 1834*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—You can fancy what weary lonesome wanderings I had, through the dirty suburbs, and along the burning streets, under a fierce May sun with east wind ; “seeking through the nation for some habitation” ! At length Jane sent me comfortable tidings of innumerable difficulties overcome ; and finally (in, I think, the fourth week) arrived herself ; with the Furniture all close following her, in one of Pickford’s Trade-boats. I carried her to certain of the hopefullest looking houses I had fallen in with, and a toilsome time we anew had : however, it was not long ; for, on the second inspection, this old Chelsea Mansion pleased very decidedly far better than any other we could see ; and, the people also whom it belongs to proving reasonable, we soon struck a bargain, and in

Arrival at Cheyne Row

three days more (precisely this day week) a Hackney Coach, loaded to the roof and beyond it with luggage and live-passengers, tumbled us all down here about eleven in the morning. By "all" I mean my Dame and myself; Bessy Barnet, who had come the night before; and—little *Chico*, the Canary-bird, who *multum jactatus*, did nevertheless arrive living and well from Puttock, and even sang violently all the way by sea or land, nay struck up his *lilt* in the very London streets wherever he could see green leaves and feel the free air. There then we sat on three trunks; I, however, with a matchbox soon lit a cigar, as Bessy did a fire; and thus with a kind of cheerful solemnity we took possession by "raising reek," and even dined, in an extempore fashion, on a box-lid covered with some accidental towel. At two o'clock the Pickfords did arrive; and *then* began the hurly-burly; which even yet is but grown quieter, will not grow quiet, for a fortnight to come.

However, the rooms and two bedrooms are now in a partially civilised state; the broken Furniture is mostly mended; I have my old writing-table again (here) *firm* as Atlas; a large wainscoted drawing-room (which is to be my study) with the "red carpet" tightly spread on it; my Books all safe in Presses; the Belisarius Picture right in front of me over the mantelpiece (most suitable to its new wainscot lodging), and my beloved *Segretario Ambulante* right behind, with the two old Italian engravings, and others that I value less, dispersed around; and so, opposite the middle of my three windows, with little but huge Scotch elm-trees looking in on one, and in the distance an ivied House, and a sunshiny sky bursting out from genial rain, I sit here already very much at home, and impart to my dear and

Chelsea in 1834

true brother a thankfulness which he is sure to share in. We have indeed very much reason to be thankful every way.

With the House we are all highly pleased, and, I think, the better, the longer we know it hitherto. I know not if you ever were at Chelsea, especially at Old Chelsea, of which this is a portion. It stretches from Battersea Bridge (a queer wooden structure, where they charge you a half-penny) along the bank of the River, Westward a little way; and Eastward (which is our side) some quarter of a mile, forming a "Cheyne Walk" (pronounced *Chainie* walk) of really grand old brick mansions, dating perhaps from Charles II.'s time ("Don Saltero's Coffeehouse" of the *Tatler* is still fresh and brisk among them), with flagged pavement; carriage way between two rows of stubborn looking high old pollarded trees; and then the River with its varied small craft, fast moving or safe-moored, and the wholesome smell (among the breezes) of sea tar. Cheyne Row (or Great Cheyne Row, when we wish to be grand) runs up at right angles from this, has some twenty Houses of the same fashion; Upper Cheyne Row (where Hunt lives) turning *again* at right angles, some stone-cast from this door.

Frontwards we have the outlook I have described already (or if we shove out our head, the River is disclosed some hundred paces to the left); backwards, from the ground floor, our own gardenkin (which I with new garden-tools am actively re-trimming every morning), and, from all other floors, nothing but leafy clumps, and green fields, and red high-peaked roofs glimmering through them: a most clear, pleasant prospect, in these fresh westerly airs! Of London nothing visible but Westminster Abbey and the topmost dome of St. Paul's;

“Gigmanity” again

other faint ghosts of spires (one other at least) disclose themselves, as the smoke-clouds shift ; but I have not yet made out what they are. At night we are pure and silent, almost as at Puttock ; and the gas-light shimmer of the great Babylon hangs stretched from side to side of our horizon. To Buckingham Gate it is thirty-two minutes of my walking (Allan Cunningham’s door about half-way) ; nearly the very same to Hyde-Park Corner, to which latter point we have omnibuses every quarter of an hour (they say) that carry you to the White-horse Cellar, or even to Coventry Street for sixpence ; calling for you at the very threshold. Nothing was ever so discrepant in my experience as the Craigen-puttock-silence of this House, and then the world-hubbub of London and its people into which a few minutes brings you ; I feel as if a day spent between the two must be the epitome of a month. . . .

The rent is £35 ; which really seems £10 cheaper than such a House could be had for in Dumfries or Annan. The secret is our old friend, “Gigmanity” : Chelsea is unfashionable ; it is also reported unhealthy. The former quality we rather like (for our neighbours still are all polite-living people) ; the latter we do not in the faintest degree believe in, remembering that Chelsea was once considered the “London Montpelier,” and knowing that in these matters now as formerly the Cockneys “know nothing,” only rush in masses blindly and sheep-wise. Our worst fault is the want of a good free *rustic* walk, like Kensington Gardens, which are above a mile off : however, we have the “College” or Hospital grounds, with their withered old pensioners ; we have open carriage ways, and lanes, and really a very pretty route to Piccadilly (different from the omnibus route) through the new Grosvenor edifices, Eaton Square,

Literary Projects

Belgrave Place, etc. I have also walked to Westminster Hall by Vauxhall, Bridge-End, Millbank, etc.; but the road is squalid, confused, dusty and detestable, and happily *need* not be returned to. To conclude, we are here on *literary* classical ground, as Hunt is continually ready to declare and unfold: not a stone-cast from this House Smollett wrote his *Count Fathom* (the house is ruined and we happily do not see it); hardly a stone-cast off, old More entertained Erasmus: to say nothing of Bolingbroke St. John, of Paradise Row and the Count de Grammont, for in truth we care almost nothing for them.

On the whole we are exceedingly content so far; and have reason to be so. I add only that our furniture came with wonderfully *little* breakage, and for less than £20, Annan included; that Jane sold all her odd things to Nanny Macqueen on really fair terms; and that we find new furniture of all sorts exceedingly cheap here, and have already got what we need, or nearly so, for less than our own old good, brought us on the spot. . . .

There is now a word to be said on Economics, and the Commissariat Department. Book selling is still at its lowest ebb; yet on the whole *better* than I expected to find it. Fraser is the only craftsman I have yet seen: he talks still of *loss* by his Magazine; and I think will not willingly employ me much, were I never so ready, at the old rate of writing. He seems a well-intentioned creature; I can really pity him in the place he occupies. I went yesterday with a project of a series of articles on French Revolution matters, chiefly to be translated from *Mémoires*: but he could not take them, at my rate, or indeed at almost any rate; for he spoke of £10 a sheet as quite a *ransom*. He has got my name (such as it is), and can do better without me. However, he

“The more Gigantic Spirit”

will cheerfully print (for “half-profits,” that is, *zero*) a projected Book of mine on the French Revolution ; to which accordingly, if no new thing occur, I shall probably very soon with all my heart address myself in full purpose to do *my best*, and put my name to it. The *Diamond Necklace* Paper his Boy got from me, by appointment, this morning ; to be examined whether it *will* make a Book ; as an *Article* I shall perhaps hardly think of giving it to him. For, you are to understand, that Radical Review of Mill’s, after seeming to be quite abandoned, has now a far fairer chance of getting started : a Sir W. Molesworth, a young man whom I have seen at Buller’s and liked, offers to furnish all the money himself (and can do it, being very rich), and to take no further hand in it, once a manager that will please Mill is found for it. Mill is to be here to-morrow evening : I think I must appoint some meeting with Molesworth, and give him my whole views of it, and express my readiness to take a most hearty hold of it ; having the prospect of right companions ; none yet but Mill and Buller, and such as we may further approve of and add. It seems likely something may come of this. In any other case, Periodical Authorship, like all other forms of it, seems *done* in the economical sense. I think of quite abandoning it ; of writing my Book ; and then, with such name as it may give me, starting some new course, or courses, to make honest wages by. A poor Fanny Wright (whom we are to hear to-night in Free-masons’ Hall) goes lecturing over the whole world : before eight, I will engage to lecture twice as well ; being, as Glen once said, with great violence, to me, “the *more* gigantic spirit of the two.”

On the whole I fear nothing. There are funds here already to keep us going above a year, independently of

The Postman's Knock

all incomings : before that we may have seen into much, tried much, and succeeded somewhat. "God's providence they cannot hinder thee of" : that is the thing I always repeat to myself, or know without repeating. . . .

God bless you, dear Brother ! *Vale mei memor.*

T. CARLYLE

II

(To his sister, Mrs. Aitken, Dumfries)

5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA, LONDON, *July 6, 1834*

MY DEAR JEAN—Your Letter, which was the first I had received from any of my Friends in Scotland, proved one of the welcomest I ever got. The Postman's two knocks (for all Postmen give two smart thumps which are known here and elsewhere as the "Postman's knock") brought me it and the newspaper, and delivered me from a multitude of vague imaginations. Newspapers indeed had come the week before, and persuaded me that nothing material was wrong ; however, it was still the best that could happen to have it all confirmed in black-on-white. Tell James that in spite of his critical penetration, the Letter "*could go*," and did go, and was welcomed as few are.

Whatever you may think, it is not a "Ten minutes" matter with me, the filling of a frank that will carry an ounce of thin writing paper : it is a decided *business*, which breaks the head of a Day for me ; which breakage, however, I am generally well disposed to execute.

Do you also take a large, even a *long*-shaped sheet, a clear pointed pen, and in the smallest hand you can master, repay it me. By no means must I want Dumfriesshire news, especially news about my Mother.

The Apostle Butterworth

The tax-loaded Post Office is still the most invaluable of Establishments ; and the ancient men, that invented *writing*, and made the voice of man triumphant over Space and Time, were deservedly accounted next to gods. I would have you, in particular, do your endeavour by assiduous practice (there is *no* other method) to perfect yourself in that divine art, the uses of which no man can calculate ; in time, as I predict, you will acquire very considerable excellence.

As for good composition, it is mainly the result of good thinking, and improves with that, if careful observation as you read attends it : the Penmanship is a secondary matter, and has only three points of perfection, or at most four, that I know of ; in all of which one may advance indefinitely by exertion of one's own : that it be straight across the paper, that it be distinct, that it be rapid,—to which, if you like, add that it be *close*, or *much of it* in a given space. “These are good advices” ? They are not mine, but the Apostle Butterworth's ! I did not design answering you so soon by a week or ten days ; as I said in Alick's Letter : but there has come a sheet from Naples, which I was beginning to be very impatient for, and I would not keep it back an instant from my Mother, whose impatience probably is still greater. She has already got hint of it in the last *Examiner*, and also that it is coming by the fore-lock, and hope I shall not miss the day again, as I fear was done in the Catlinns case, after all my exertions : as for you, make up the Parcel again instantly for Jardine and Scotsbrig, or there will be no forgiveness for you.

As you have doubtless seen or will see the copious despatches I have sent to Annandale about our Household Establishment, wherein nothing from the very

Vehicles and Faces

watering-pan and marigold flowers upwards is forgotten, I need not dilate farther on that topic. We have at length all but got the last struggles of the upholsterer squadron handsomely conducted out of doors, with far less damage than might have been apprehended; and sit quietly in a Dwelling-place really much beyond what could have been anticipated; where, if Providence but grant us grace not to be wanting to *ourselves*, the rest may pass quite uncriticised. We have not yet ceased to admire the union of quietness and freshness of air, and the outlook into green trees (Plum trees, walnuts, even mulberries, they say), with the close neighbourhood of the noisiest Babylon that ever raged and *fumed* (with coal smoke) on the face of this Planet. I can alternate between the one and the other in half an hour! The London streets themselves are quite a peculiar object, and I daresay of almost *inexhaustible* significance. There is such a torrent of vehicles and faces: the slow-rolling, all-defying waggon, like a mountain in motion, the dejected Hackney-Coach, that "has seen better days," but goes along as with a tough uncomplaining patience, the gay equipage with its light bounding air, and *flunkies* of colour hanging behind it; the *distractea* cab (a thing like a cradle set aslant on its foot-end, where you sit open in front but free from rain), which always some *blackguard* drives with the fury of Jehu; the huge omnibus (a pointed *Corn-Kist*, of twenty feet long, set on four wheels: no, it cannot be *twenty* feet!) which runs along all streets from all points of the compass, as a sixpenny or shilling stage-coach, towards "The Bank" (of England); Butchers' and Brewers' and Bakers' Drays: all these, with wheelbarrows, trucks (hurries), dogcarts, and a nameless flood of other *smash* *trash*, hold on unweariedly their ever-vexed chaotic way.

Philosopher at the Opera

And then of foot-passengers ! From the King to the Beggar ; all in haste, all with a look of care and endeavour ; and as if there *were* really "Deevil a thing but one man oppressing another." To wander along and read all this : it is reading one of the strangest everlasting *Newspaper Columns* the eye ever opened on : a Newspaper Column of *living* Letters (as I often say), that was printed in ETERNITY, and is here published only for a little while in TIME, and will soon be recalled—taken out of circulation again.

For the rest, we live exceedingly happy here ; as yet visited by few, and happily by almost *none* that is not worth being visited by. At any time, in half an hour, I can have company enough of the sort going ; and scarcely above once or twice in the week is my Day taken from me by any intrusion. I am getting rather stiffly to work again ; and once well at work, can defy the whole Powers of Darkness, and say in my heart (as Tom Ker the mason did to Denbie and "the Marquis" or some Military minion of his) : "Ye will go your length, gentlemen ; my name's Tom Ker." By and by, if all go right, you shall see some book of mine with my name (not of "Tom Ker") on it, and the best I can do. Pray that it be honestly done, let its reception be what it will.

Of "amusements," beyond mere strolling, I take little thought. By acquaintance with newspaper people (such as Hunt) I fancy we might procure free admission to the Theatres, even to the Opera, almost every night : but, alas ! what would it avail ? I actually went, one idle night before Jane came, to Covent Garden ; found it a very mystery of stupidity and abomination ; and so tiresome that I came away long before the end, and declare that the dullest sermon I ever heard was cheery in comparison.

Philosopher and the Fireworks

The night before last, looking out from our (back) Bedroom window at midnight, I saw the many-coloured rockets rising from Vauxhall Gardens, and thought with myself: "Very well, gentlemen, if you have 'guinea admission' to spare for it; only, thank Heaven, I am not within a measured mile of you!"—There are a few good, even noble people here too; there must be a few; if there were not, the whole concern would take fire: of these I even know some, and hope to know more.

But now, my dear Sister, you have enough of London; let me turn a little northward. I am much obliged by your description of Mother's settlement; I can form a very tolerable notion of her arrangement in the two well-known rooms, and find the most natural that could be made. I hope, however, the *Clock* is now got safely hoisted up: surely, among so many stout hands, any task of that kind could not be difficult. However, where a Honeymoon is in progress one must *thole*, one must *thole*. I also like very well to hear of your Jamie's boarding with our Mother, while he is at his work in the neighbourhood. I follow him across the fresh fields, daily in the morning, to the Ha, and heartily wish him a *useful* day. There is no other way of making a *pleasant* day; that I could ever hear of. That he finds employment in his honest vocation is a great blessing, for which I trust you are thankful.

Tell him to *follow* his vocation honestly, not as a man-pleaser, or one working for the eye of man only, but as one forever under *another* Eye that never slumbers or sleeps, that *sees* in secret, and will reward openly. I hope and believe that this *is* his course, that he will persevere in it, let the wind of accident blow fair or foul; and so I can prophesy all manner of good for him.

... There is much louder thunder to-day, and a

Advice to Prudence

copious deluge of rain ; of all which we hope to reap the benefit to-morrow, for the air was growing foully uncomfortable, and oppressive too ; a sour east-wind, amid the sultriest brick kiln heat, with dusts enough and vapours as we have them in these streets and ways. A day's rain washes everything above ground and beneath it. Next morning we can "sniff the *cailier* air," for it is there to snuff. . . . This is a far larger Letter than yours, Dame ; and deserves two in return for it ; think of that, and of what you are to *do* in consequence. . . . That Scotsbrig residence, I think with you and have always thought, can hardly be permanently comfortable for our Mother ; if it serve well for one year, that is all I hope of it : then other outlooks may have opened. In the meanwhile, Toleration, "the Act of Mutual Toleration !" One can live without it *nowhere* on this earth's surface.—Remember me kindly to dear little Prudence. Tell her to mind her seam, and be considerate and wise, and grow daily wiser ; and it will go better and better with her.—Jane, whose health seems better than of old and still improving, sends her love to all of you. . . . And so farewell, my dear Sister. Be true and loving !—Ever your affectionate

T. CARLYLE

III

(To Dr. Carlyle, Naples)

5 GREAT CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA

LONDON, *August 15, 1834*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—How long it is since I wrote last is not accurately in my memory ; I know only that your last Letter has been in my hands, and indeed in my Mother's (to whom it was fortunately sent) above a fortnight ; and that *my* last, which was all that

Tidings of Annandale

remained due when you wrote, must be fairly digested by this time ; so that now, on a day of leisure, another may be fitly despatched. The news of your welfare, your *Seelen-bekennnisse*, your trustful brotherly affection : all this is ever one of the most solacing items of my lot. To address you in return, and impart my satisfaction and anxieties, with the assurance of having them heartily sympathised in, is also one of my agreeablest employments. Would you were here again ! But May is coming, and with it flowers. By God's blessing you will be restored to us ; not to wander, we will hope, any more.

There came a Letter from Alick very shortly after mine to you was sent away. All is in the usual way in Annandale ; for we have heard again only yesterday from Mrs. Welsh, who had seen Jean and Jenny at Dumfries : nay this moment since I begun to write, the Dumfries newspaper arrives with the mail of safety on it. Alick represents our mother as moving about a good deal on Harry, and keeping her health very tolerably : she does not seem altogether *hefted* yet, he says, at Scotsbrig : however, the new Daughter-in-law seems to be a reasonable young woman, well disposed to do the best for all parties there ; till a new Whitsunday at least there can nothing go very far wrong among them. Jamie and she, it would appear, are still fond as turtle-doves and prolonging their Honey-moon. . . . As for Alick himself, he writes in the middle of a wet abundant hay-harvest, and dates on the successive Sundays ; he has signified by letter to his Cattlins Landlord that unless they abate him £20 of the rent, he cannot keep the Farm longer than Whitsunday, and so waits, in a kind of confusing uncertainty, the slow issue ; forecasting rather that he will *go*.

Longing for a Hill

I am sorry for Alick : he has a heavy burden to bear, and toils at it rather impetuously than steadfastly. There is much wisely-suppressed energy in him too ; but he feels, in general, that he is not in his sphere ; and has internally only an artificial kind of composure. . . .

As for myself, I go on here almost without adventure of any kind. All of us have tolerable health : Jane generally better than before ; I certainly not worse, and run more in the ancient accustomed fashion. I am diligent with the shower bath ; my pilgrimages to the Museum and my other Town-errands keep me in walking enough ; once or twice weekly, on an evening, Jane and I stroll out along the "Bank of the River," or about "The College," and see white-shirted Cockneys in their green canoes, or old Pensioners pensively smoking tobacco.

I long much for a *hill*, but unhappily there is no such thing ; only knolls, and these with difficulty, are attainable.

The London street tumult has become a kind of marching music to me. I walk along, following my own meditations, without thinking of it. Company comes in desirable quantity, not deficient, not excessive, and there is talk enough from time to time. I myself, however, when I consider it, find the whole all too *thin*, unnutritive, unavailing, and that I am *alone* still under the high vault. All London-born men without exception seem to me narrow-built, considerably perverted men, rather fractions of a man. Hunt, by nature a *very* clever man, is one instance ; Mill, in quite another manner, is another. These and others continue to come about me, as with the cheering sound of temporary *music*, and are right welcome so : a higher co-operation

Unitarian Fox

will perhaps somewhere else or sometime hence disclose itself.

"There was a piper had a Cow,
And he had nought to give her ;
He took his pipes and play'd a spring,
And bade the Cow consider !"

Allan Cunningham was here two nights ago, very friendly, very full of Nithsdale and pleasant *Natür-mensch*.

Mill gives me logical developments of *how* men act (chiefly in politics) ; Hunt tricky devices, and crochety whimsicalities on the same theme : *what* they act is a thing neither of them much sympathises in, much seems to know.

I sometimes long greatly for Irving, for the old Irving of fifteen years ago : nay the poor actual gift-of-tongues Irving has seemed desirable to me ; and I have actually, as you shall hear, made my way through to him again.

We dined with Mrs. (Platonica) Taylor and the Unitarian Fox (of the *Repository*, if you know it), one day : Mill also was of the party, and the Husband, an obtuse most joyous-natured man, the pink of Social hospitality. Fox is a little thick-set bushy-locked man of five-and-forty, with bright sympathetic, thoughtful eyes (the whole face reminded me of Æneas Rait's, compressed, and well buttressed out into broadness), with a tendency to pot-belly and *snuffiness* : from these hints you can construe him, the best *Socinian Philosopher* going, but not a whit more.

I shall like well enough to meet the man again ; but I doubt he will not me. . . . We walked home however, even Jane did, all the way from the Regent's Park, and felt that we had done a duty. For we, from the Socinians, as I take it, *wird Nichts*. Here too let me

Mill's Enthusiasm

wind up the Radical-Periodical Editorship, which your last letter naturally speculates on. Mill I seem to discern has given it to this same Fox (who has just quitted his Preachership, and will, like myself, be out of the world): partly I should fancy by Mrs. Taylor's influence, partly as himself thinking him the safer man. *Ebbene!* I can already picture to myself the Radical Party Periodical, and even prophesy its destiny: with myself it had not been so; the only thing certain would have been difficulty, pain and contradiction; which I should probably have undertaken: which I am far from breaking my heart that I have missed. I may mention too that Mill is so taken with my *Diamond Necklace*, he in a covert way offered the other night to print it at his own expense, if I would give it him, that he might have the pleasure and profit of reviewing it! Mill likes me well; and on his embarrassed face when Fox happened to be talked of, I read both that Editorship business, and also that Mill had *known* my want of it; which latter was all that I desired to read. As you well say, disappointment on disappointment only simplifies one's course; your possibilities only become diminished, your choice is rendered easier. In general I bate no jot of confidence in myself and in my cause. Nay it often seems to me as if the extremity of suffering, if such were appointed me, might bring out an extremity of energy as yet unknown to myself. God grant me faith; cleanness and peaceableness of heart! I make no other prayer.

As to Literary work there is still no offer made that promises to bring in a penny; though I foresee that probably such will come, and, as they often do, all in a rush. Mill will wait if his Fox concern go on; nay poor Heraud was here the other day endeavouring to

Sartor's First Appearance

bespeak me for a Periodical of his ; for even he is to have a dud of a Periodical. Cheeriest and emptiest of all the sons of men ! Yet in his emptiness, as in that of a dried bladder, he keeps triumphantly jingling his Coleridgean long-quavered metaphysical cherry-stones, and even "makes a kind of martial music" for himself thereby. I do not remember that I ever met a more ridiculous-harmless froth-lather of a creature in all my travels. He lets you tumble him hither and thither, and cut him in two as you like ; but in the cheer-fullest way joins again, and is brisk froth-lather as before. One should surely learn by him.—The *Diamond Necklace*, I should have told you, has been refused by Moxon : shall I let Mill print ? I do not know, and really hardly care. As to Moxon, I reckon that we are not only done with *this*, but with *all*, and need not for the present come into contact again. . . . [Frazer] has finished *Teufelsdröckh*, paid me for it instantly (in all £82, 1s.) ; and got me 58 perfect copies (really readable pamphlets of 107 pages, and all made up without break), which I was yesterday despatching far and wide from his shop. Some twenty copies yet remain, which I am in no haste to dispose of. . . . The Book is worth little, now that I see it ; yet not worth nothing, and will perhaps amuse you. I rejoice heartily in having done with it——. My grand task, as you already know, is the *French Revolution* ; which, alas, perplexes me much. More *Books* on it, I find, are but a repetition of those before read ; I learn nothing or almost nothing further by Books : yet I am as far as possible from understanding it.

Bedenklichkeiten of all kinds environ me. To be true or not to be true ? There is the risk. And then, to be popular or not to be popular ? that too is a question

Chelsea Economy

that plays most complexly into the other. We shall see, we shall try : *Par ma tête seule!*—Before quitting this of Literature, I must tell you, among numberless discouragements, of two most encouraging messages I have had. The first is from an unknown Irishman from Cork, or rather in Cork :¹ did I tell you of him before? The second is from that American Craigenputtock friend of ours² from whom there came a letter and Books lately. Both the two, in the most authentic and credible though exaggerated manner, cry out Εὐγε! for which I am heartily obliged to them. It is in regard to *Teufelsdröckh*, and they both make their objections too. The day of small things! For which, however, one cannot but be thankful. And so enough of my endeavourings and my cares and little pleasures. My good Jack has now as clear a view of [us] all as in a single sheet he could expect. We may say in the words of the Sansculotte Deputy writing to the Convention of the progress of right principles : *Tout va bien ici, LE PAIN MANQUE!* Jane and I often repeat this with laughter. But in truth we live very cheap here (perhaps not above £50 a year dearer than at Puttock), and so can hold out a long while independent of chance. Utter poverty itself (if I hold fast by the faith) has no terrors for me, should it ever come.

I told you I had seen Irving. It was but yesterday, in Newman Street, after *four* prior ineffectual attempts.

William Hamilton, who with his wife was here on Saturday, told me Irving had grown worse again, and Mrs. Irving had been extremely ill : he too seemed to think my Cards had been withheld. Much grieved with this news I called once more on Monday : a new failure. Yesterday I went again with unsuppressible indignation

¹ Father O'Shea.

² Emerson.

Apostolic Sufferings

mixed with my pity. After some shying I was admitted ! Poor Irving ! he lay there on a sofa, begged my pardon for not rising ; his wife, who also did not and probably could not well rise, sat at his feet, and watched all the time I was there, miserable, haggard. . . . Irving once lovingly ordered her away : but she lovingly excused herself and sat still. He complains of biliousness ; of a pain at his right short-rib ; has a short thick cough which comes on at the slightest irritation. Poor fellow ! I brought a short gleam of old Scottish laughter into his face, into his voice, and that too set him coughing. He said it was the Lord's will ; looked weak, dispirited, partly embarrassed. He continues toiling daily, though the Doctor (Darling) says, rest only can cure him.

Is it not mournful ; hyper-tragical ? There are moments when I determine on sweeping in upon all Tongue-work and Martindoms and accursed choking Cobwebberies, and snatching away my old best Friend, to save him from Death and the Grave ! It seems too likely he will die there. At lowest I will go again soon and often : I cannot think of it with patience.

. . . Mrs. Welsh was up at Craigenputtock ; it looks all very wild, and made her greet "*not* that we were gone" : she had escorted thither a certain Indian friend who has (through M'Diarmid) taken the shooting, with right to lodging, for £10 a year. Old Nanny M'Queen pays us other £10 for the Park and right of living in the House, with charge of taking care of it, and admitting any decent "Gunner body" of that kind. Both sums I believe will be faithfully paid ; and old Nanny is said to be the carefulest of women. . . . Alas the paper is quite done.

Attend me on the margins.

I have not said a word about Italy ; for indeed, my

Thorwaldsen

dear Brother, except you there is nothing there that my thoughts turn upon ; and your position has in it the happy monotony (happy for your friends) of one at rest. Well do I understand those meditations of yours, those goings forth into the uttermost shores of being, those soundings into dim depths. Indulge not too much in them. For the rest, rejoice always that you have found footing ; prepare yourself not only to stand on it, but to build on it. I wish you had some more decisive occupation : but such is not appointed yet for a time. Meanwhile you are *not* idle, you are active as the scene allows ; many future years, I trust, will be the better for this leisure. Have you *any* company ? Tell me whom. Give me descriptions of them, and “how they *ack i' the vaarious pleaces.*” Do you know Thorwaldsen at Rome personally ?

This Rennie seems to be intimate with him, and to love him well. He has cut a head of him, and has it here : the head of a man of energy and sensibility, with a *nose* of most honest simplicity. Go and see him, and try to get speech of him : a man of genius is always the best worth conferring with. . . . Jane, who is not very well this particular day, sends you her sisterly love. She takes well with Chelsea, and seems to be cheerfuller than she was wont.

And so, my dear Brother, here must I end. *Gehab' dich wohl ; leb' heiter ; lieb' mich.* May all good things be with you.—I must to Charing Cross where the Post is still open. *Felicissima notte!*—Ever your faithful
Brother,

T. C.

Rogers and Buonaparte

Byron is interested in Byron ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Thomas Moore)

I

September 5, 1813

YOU need not tie yourself down to a day with Toderini, but send him at your leisure, having anatomised him into such annotations as you want; I do not believe that he has ever undergone that process before, which is the best reason for not sparing him now.

Rogers has returned to town, but not yet recovered of the *Quarterly*. What fellows these reviewers are! "these bugs do fear us all." They made you fight, and me (the milkiest of men) a satirist, and will end by making Rogers madder than Ajax. I have been reading *Memory* again, the other day, and *Hope* together, and retain all my preference of the former. His elegance is really wonderful—there is no such thing as a vulgar line in his book.

What say you to Buonaparte? Remember, I back him against the field, barring catalepsy and the elements. Nay, I almost wish him success against all countries but this,—were it only to choke the *Morning Post* or his undutiful father-in-law with that rebellious bastard of Scandinavian adoption, Bernadotte. Rogers wants me to go with him on a crusade to the Lakes, and to besiege you on our way. This last is a great temptation, but I fear it will not be in my power, unless you would go on with one of us somewhere—no matter where. It is too late for Matlock, but we might hit upon some scheme, high life, or low—the last would be much the best for amusement. I am so sick of the other, that I quite sigh for a cider-cellar, or a cruise in a smugglers' sloop.

His Lordship at Hastings

You cannot wish more than I do that the fates were a little more accommodating to our parallel lives, which prolong *ad infinitum*, without coming a jot nearer. I almost wish I were married, too—which is saying much—all my friends, seniors and juniors, are in for it, and ask me to be godfather,—the only species of parentage which, I believe, will ever come to my share in a lawful way ; and, in an unlawful one, by the blessing of Lucina, we can never be certain,—though the parish may. I suppose I shall hear from you to-morrow, if not, this goes as it is, but I leave room for a P.S., in case anything requires an answer.—Ever, etc.

II

HASTINGS, *August 3, 1814*

BY the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend Ocean ; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for an hour in the morning as his daughters to Paphos could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and eating turbot, smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs,—and listening to my friend Hodgson's raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his,—and walking on cliffs and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the *dolce far niente*, for the last fortnight. I met a son of Lord Erskine's, who says he has been married a year, and is the "happiest of men" ; and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also the "happiest of men" ; so, it is worth while being here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep them in countenance.

It rejoiceth me that you like *Lara*. Jeffrey is out

The Shepherd's Curse

with his 45th number, which I suppose you have got. He is only too kind to me, in my share of it, and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath bedecked me. But then, *surgit amari*, etc.—the gentlemen of the *Champion*, and Perry, have got hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address to Lady Jersey on the picture-abduction by our Regent, and have published them—with my name, too, smack—without ever asking leave, or inquiring whether or no ! Damn their impudence, and damn every thing. It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no more about it.

You shall have *Lara* and *Jacque* (both with some additions) when out ; but I am still demurring and delaying, and in a fuss, and so is Rogers in his way.

Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits twenty-five thousand pounds ; but that don't prevent me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury myself there—and let my beard grow—and hate you all.

Oh ! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettrick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray ; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose “bills” are never “lifted,” he adds, *totidem verbis*, “God damn him and them both.” I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced.

The said Hogg is a strange being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a poet ; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies. London and the world is the only place to take the conceit out of a man—in the milling phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind ;—during which wind, he affirms, the said Scott, he is sure, is

A Glimpse of "Mr. Cypress"

not at his ease,—to say the least of "it." Lord, Lord, if these home-keeping mushets had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tasted a little open boating in a white squall—or a gale in "the Gut"—or the "Bay of Biscay," with no gale at all—how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations—to say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with simple adultery, and compounding it as they went along.

I have forwarded your letter to Murray,—by the way, you had addressed it to Miller. Pray write to me, and say what art thou doing? "not pushed!"—Oons! how is this?—these "flaws and starts" must be "authorised by your grandam" and are unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to hear of your discrepancy with the * * s, or rather your abjuration of agreement. I don't want to be impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am therefore at a loss what to say.

I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the proper price of your poem, as long as there is a prospect of getting it. For my own part, I have *seriously* and *not whiningly* (for that is not my way—at least, it used not to be), neither hopes, nor prospects, and scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy, but not in a manner that can or ought to last,—but enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite enervated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter were to offer me my choice of the contents of his benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I was born, as the nurses say, with a "silver spoon in my mouth," it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with much relish,—unless it be cayenne.

However, I have grievances enough to occupy me that

A Prophet's Boast

way too ; but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, *sine die*.

Ever, dear M., yours, etc.

P.S.— Don't forget my Godson. You could not have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me, being used to carry double without inconvenience. . . .

William Blake utters a manifesto



(To Thomas Butts)

FELPHAM, *November 22, 1802*

DEAR SIR,—My brother tells me that he fears you are offended with me. I fear so too, because there appears some reason why you might be so ; but when you have heard me out, you will not be so.

I have now given two years to the intense study of those parts of the art which relate to light and shade and colour, and am convinced that either my understanding is incapable of comprehending the beauties of colouring, or the pictures which I painted for you are equal in every part of the art, and superior in one, to anything that has been done since the age of Raphael.

All Sir J. Reynolds' Discourses to the Royal Academy will show that the Venetian finesse in art can never be united with the majesty of colouring necessary to historical beauty ; and in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Gilpin, author of a work on picturesque scenery, he says thus :

“It may be worth consideration whether the epithet picturesque is not applicable to the excellences of the inferior schools rather than to the higher.”

“The works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, etc., appear

Confidence of Genius

to me to have nothing of it ; whereas Rubens and the Venetian painters may almost be said to have nothing else."

" Perhaps *picturesque* is somewhat synonymous to the word taste, which we should think improperly applied to Homer or Milton, but very well to Prior or Pope. I suspect that the application of these words is to excellences of an inferior order, and which are incompatible with the grand style. You are certainly right in saying that variety of tints and forms is picturesque ; but it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the reverse of this (*uniformity of colour* and a *long continuation of lines*) produces grandeur."

So says Sir Joshua, and so say I ; for I have now proved that the parts of the art which I neglected to display, in those little pictures and drawings which I had the pleasure and profit to do for you, are incompatible with the designs.

There is nothing in the art which our painters do that I can confess myself ignorant of. I also know and understand, and can assuredly affirm, that the works I have done for you are equal to the Caracci or Raphael (and I am now some years older than Raphael was when he died). I say they are equal to Caracci or Raphael, or else I am blind, stupid, ignorant, and incapable, in two years' study, to understand those things which a boarding-school miss can comprehend in a fortnight. Be assured, my dear friend, that there is not one touch in those drawings and pictures but what came from my head and my heart in unison ; that I am proud of being their author, and grateful to you my employer ; and that I look upon you as the chief of my friends, whom I would endeavour to please, because you, among all men, have enabled me to produce these things. I would not

Still more Confidence

send you a drawing or a picture till I had again reconsidered my notions of art, and had put myself back as if I was a learner.

I have proved that I am right, and shall now go on with the vigour I was, in my childhood, famous for. But I do not pretend to be perfect : yet, if my works have faults, Caracci's, Correggio's, and Raphael's have faults also.

Let me observe that the yellow-leather flesh of old men, the ill-drawn and ugly old women, and, above all, the daubed black-and-yellow shadows that are found in most fine, ay, and the finest pictures, I altogether reject as ruinous to effect, though connoisseurs may think otherwise.

Let me also notice that Caracci's pictures are not like Correggio's, nor Correggio's like Raphael's; and, if neither of them was to be encouraged till he did like any of the others, he must die without encouragement. My pictures are unlike any of these painters, and I would have them to be so. I think the manner I adopt more perfect than any other. No doubt they thought the same of theirs. You will be tempted to think that, as I improve, the pictures, etc., that I did for you are not what I would now wish them to be.

On this I beg to say that they are what I intended them, and that I know I never shall do better ; for, if I were to do them over again, they would lose as much as they gained, because they were done in the heat of my spirits.

But you will justly inquire why I have not written all this time to you. I answer I have been very unhappy, and could not think of troubling you about it, or any of my real friends. (I have written many letters to you which I burned and did not send.) And why I have not

“ Among the Stars of God ”

before now finished the miniature I promised to Mrs. Butts, I answer I have not, till now, in any degree pleased myself, and now I must entreat you to excuse faults, for portrait-painting is the direct contrary to designing and historical painting, in every respect.

If you have not nature before you for every touch, you cannot paint portrait ; and if you have nature before you at all, you cannot paint history. It was Michael Angelo's opinion, and is mine.

Pray give my wife's love with mine to Mrs. Butts. Assure her that it cannot be long before I have the pleasure of painting from you in person, and then she may expect a likeness. But now I have done all I could, and know she will forgive any failure in consideration of the endeavour.

And now let me finish with assuring you that, though I have been very unhappy, I am so no longer. I am again emerged into the light of day ; I still and shall to eternity embrace Christianity, and adore Him who is the express image of God ; but I have travelled through perils and darkness not unlike a champion. I have conquered, and shall go on conquering. Nothing can withstand the fury of my course among the stars of God and in the abysses of the accuser.

My enthusiasm is still what it was, only enlarged and confirmed.

I now send two pictures, and hope you will approve of them.






I have enclosed the account of money received and work done, which I ought long ago to have sent you. Pray forgive errors in omissions of this kind. I am incapable of many attentions which it is my duty to observe towards you, through multitude of employment, and through hope of soon seeing you again. I often

The Prophet's Barometer

omit to inquire of you, but pray let me now hear how you do, and of the welfare of your family.

Accept my sincere love and respect.—I remain yours
sincerely, WILLIAM BLAKE

A piece of seaweed serves for barometer, and gets wet and dry as the weather gets so.

Epistolary *Sententiæ*     

MY chief philosophy has always been to do only what I deem pleasant. This is why I write to you.
A. HOUSSAYE (to a lady)

OPINIONS is a species of property that I am always desirous of sharing with my friends.

CHARLES LAMB

It is not always the giver who gives; it is not always the receiver who receives.

MALAY PROVERB

It is a frail memory that remembers but present things.

BEN JONSON

WHEN I began this letter I thought I had something to say: but I believe the truth was I had nothing to do.

EDWARD FITZGERALD

LET us write oftener, and longer; and we shall not tempt the Fates by inchoating too long a hope of letter-paper

IBID.

Epistolary *Sententiæ*

A VERY good companion, a charitable man, and a friend to those that were good, and had a face like any blessing.

CERVANTES

THIS, too, is in our memories for ever—an addition to our stock—a light for memory to turn to when it wishes a beam upon its face.

LEIGH HUNT

A THANKFUL man owes a courtesie ever : the unthankful but when he needs it.

BEN JONSON

I LIVE between the folds of a sheet of paper.

EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN

X

LITERATURE AND ART

Haydon, Keats, and Shakespeare ♪ ♪ ♪

March 1818

MY DEAR KEATS,—I shall go mad! In a field at Stratford-upon-Avon, that belonged to Shakespeare, they have found a gold ring and seal, with the initials W. S. and a true lover's knot between. If this is not Shakespeare, who is it?—A true lover's knot! I saw an impression to-day, and am to have one as soon as possible: as sure as that you breathe, and that he was the first of beings, the seal belonged to him.

O Lord!

B. R. HAYDON

TEIGNMOUTH, *Sunday Morning*

MY DEAR HAYDON,—In sooth I hope you are not too sanguine about that seal, in sooth I hope it is not Brummagem, in double sooth I hope it is his, and in triple sooth I hope I shall have an impression. Such a piece of intelligence came doubly welcome to me while in your own county and in your own hand, not but what I have blown up the said county for its watery qualifications.

“To Vex the World”

The six first days I was here it did nothing but rain, and at that time having to write to a friend, I gave Devonshire a good blowing up; it has been fine for almost three days, and I was coming round a bit, but to-day it rains again.

With me the county is on its good behaviour. I have enjoyed the most delightful walks these three fine days, beautiful enough to make me content.

The Dean gives Mr. Pope news of *Gulliver* and himself

September 29, 1725

I AM now returning to the noble scene of Dublin, into the *grand monde*, for fear of burying my parts, to signalise myself among curates and vicars, and correct all corruptions crept in relating to the weight of bread and butter, through those dominions where I govern.

I have employed my time (besides ditching) in finishing, correcting, amending, and transcribing my *Travels* (*Gulliver's*), in four parts complete, newly augmented and intended for the press when the world shall deserve them, or rather when a printer shall be found brave enough to venture his ears. I like the scheme of our meeting after distresses and dispersions.

But the chief end I propose to myself in all my labours, is to vex the world, rather than divert it; and if I could compass that design without hurting my own person or fortune, I would be the most indefatigable writer you have ever seen without reading. I am exceedingly pleased that you have done with translations. Lord Treasurer Oxford often lamented that a rascally world should lay you under a necessity of misemploying your genius for so long a time. But since you will now

Misanthrope but Friend

be so much better employed, when you think of the world, give it one lash the more at my request.

I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities ; and all my love is towards individuals.

For instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers ; but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, and Judge Such-a-one.

It is so with physicians. I will not speak of my own trade, soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest.

But principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth. This is the system upon which I have governed myself many years (but do not tell), and so I shall go on until I have done with them.

I have got materials toward a treatise proving the falsity of that definition *animal rationale*, and to show it should be only *rationis capax*. Upon this great foundation of misanthropy (though not in Timon's manner) the whole building of my travels is erected ; and I never will have peace of mind till all honest men are of my opinion.

By consequence you are to embrace it immediately, and procure that all who deserve my esteem may do so too.

The matter is so clear, that it will admit of no dispute ; nay, I will hold a hundred pounds that you and I agree in the point. I did not know your *Odyssey* was finished, being yet in the country, which I shall leave in three days.

I thank you kindly for the present, but shall like it three-fourths the less for the mixture you mention of other hands ; however, I am glad you saved yourself so much drudgery. I have been long told by Mr. Ford of your great achievements in building and planting, and especially of your subterranean passage to your

Arbuthnot's One Fault

garden, whereby you turned a blunder into a beauty, which is a piece of *Ars Poetica*. I have almost done with Harridans, and shall soon become old enough to fall in love with girls of fourteen.

The lady whom you describe to live at court, to be deaf and no party woman, I take to be mythology, but I know not how to moralise it.

She cannot be Mercy, for Mercy is neither deaf nor lives at court; Justice is blind, and perhaps deaf, but neither is she a court-lady; Fortune is both blind and deaf, and a court-lady; but then she is a most damnable party woman, and will never make me easy as you promise.

It must be riches, which answers all your description. I am glad she visits you; but my voice is so weak, that I doubt she will never hear me.

Mr. Lewis sent me an account of Dr. Arbuthnot's illness, which is a very sensible affliction to me, who, by living so long out of the world, have lost that hardness of heart contracted by years and general conversation. I am daily losing friends, and neither seeking nor getting others.

Oh, if the world had but a dozen of Arbuthnots in it, I would burn my *Travels*! But, however, he is not without fault.

There is a passage in Bede, highly commending the piety and learning of the Irish in that age, where, after abundance of praises, he overthrows them all, by lamenting that, alas! they kept Easter at a wrong time of the year. So our Doctor has every quality and virtue that can make a man amiable or useful; but, alas, he hath a sort of slouch in his walk! I pray God protect him, for he is an excellent Christian, though not a Catholic.

I hear nothing of my friend Gay; but I find the court

Little Flams on Miss Carteret

keeps him at hard meat. I advised him to come over here with a Lord-Lieutenant. Phillips writes little flams (as Lord Leicester called those sort of verses) on Miss Carteret.

A Dublin blacksmith, a great poet, hath imitated his manner in a poem to the same Miss.

Phillips is a complainer; and on this occasion I told Lord Carteret, that complainers never succeeded at court, though railers do.

Are you altogether a country gentleman, that I must address you out of London, to the hazard of your losing this precious letter, which I will now conclude, although so much paper is left? I have an ill name and therefore shall not subscribe it; but you will guess it comes from one who esteems and loves you about half as much as you deserve, I mean as much as he can. I am in great concern, at what I am just told is in some of the newspapers, that Lord Bolingbroke is much hurt by a fall in hunting. I am glad he has so much youth and vigour left (of which he hath not been thrifty); but I wonder he has no more discretion.

Miss Edgeworth visits Sir Walter in Edinburgh 

(To Mrs. Ruxton)

EDINBURGH, 32 ABERCROMBY PLACE

June 8, 1823

YOU have had our history up to Kinneil House. Mr. and Miss Stewart accompanied us some miles on our road to show us the palace of Linlithgow—very interesting to see, but not to describe. The drive from Linlithgow to Edinburgh is nothing extraordinary, but the road approaching the city is grand, and the first

A Note from Sir Walter

view of the Castle and "mine own romantic town" delighted my companions; the day was fine and they were sitting outside on the barouche seat—a seat which you, my dear aunt, would not have envied them with all their fine prospects; by this approach to Edinburgh there are no suburbs; you drive at once through magnificent broad streets and fine squares—all the houses are of stone, darker than the Ardbraaccain stone, and of a kind that is little injured by weather or time. Margaret Alison had taken lodgings for us in Abercromby Place—finely built, with hanging shrubbery garden, and the house as delightful as the situation. As soon as we had packed, and arranged our things the evening of our arrival, we walked, about ten minutes' distance from us, to our dear old friends the Alisons. We found them shawled and bonneted, just coming to see us.

Mr. Alison and Sir Walter Scott had settled that we should drive the first day after our arrival with Mr. Alison, which was just what we wished; but on our return home we found a note from Sir Walter:

"DEAR MISS EDGORTH,—I have just received your kind note, just when I had persuaded myself it was most likely I should see you in person or hear of your arrival. Mr. Alison writes to me you are engaged to drive with him to-morrow, which puts Roslin out of the question for that day, as it might keep you late. On Sunday I hope you will join our family party at five, and on Monday I have asked one or two of the northern lights on purpose to meet you. I should be engrossing at any time, but we shall be more disposed to be so just now, because on the 12th I am under the necessity of going to a different kingdom (only the kingdom of *Fife*) for a day or two. To-morrow, if it is quite agreeable, I will wait on you about twelve, and hope you will permit me to show you some of our improvements.—I am always most respectfully yours,

WALTER SCOTT

"EDINBURGH, *Friday*

First Sound of Walter Scott's Voice

"*P.S.*—Our old family coach is *licensed* to carry *six* ; so take no care on that score. I enclose Mr. Alison's note ; truly sorry I could not accept the invitation it contains.

"*P.S.*—My wife insists I shall add that the Laird of Staffa promised to look in on us this evening at eight or nine, for the purpose of letting us hear one of his clansmen sing some Highland boat songs and the like, and that if you will come, as the Irish should to the Scotch, without any ceremony, you will hear what is perhaps more curious than mellifluous. The man returns to the Isles to-morrow. There are no strangers with us ; no party ; none but all our own family and two old friends.

"Moreover, all our woman-kind have been calling it Gibb's hotel, so if you are not really tired and late, you have not even pride, the ladies' last defence, to oppose to this request. But, above all, do not fatigue yourself and the young ladies.

"No dressing to be thought of."

Ten o'clock struck as I read the note ; we were tired—we were not fit to be seen ; but I thought it right to accept "Walter Scott's" cordial invitation ; sent for a hackney coach, and just as we were, without dressing, went. As the coach stopped, we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened, heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants—"The Miss Edgeworths" sounded from hall to landing-place, and as I paused for a moment in the anteroom, I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice, "The Miss Edgeworths *come*."

The room was lighted by only one globe lamp. A circle were singing low and beating time. All stopped in an instant, and Walter Scott in the most cordial and courteous manner stepped forward to welcome us : "Miss Edgeworth, this is so kind of you !"

My first impression was that he was neither so large, nor so heavy in appearance, as I had been led to expect by description, bust, and picture. He is more lame than

Highland Boat Songs

I expected, but not unwieldy ; his countenance, even by the uncertain light in which I first saw it, pleased me much, benevolent and full of genius, without the slightest effort at expression ; delightfully natural, as if he did not know he was Walter Scott or the Great Unknown of the north, as if he only thought of making others happy.

After naming to us "Lady Scott, Staffa, my daughter Lockhart, Sophia, another daughter Anne, my son, my son-in-law Lockhart," just in the broken circle as they then stood, and showing me that only his family and his friends, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Sharpe, were present, he sat down for a minute beside me on a low sofa ; and on my saying, "Do not let us interrupt what was going on," he immediately rose and begged Staffa to bid his boatman strike up again. "Will you join in the circle with us ?" He put the end of a silk handkerchief into my hand, and others into my sisters' ; they held these handkerchiefs all in their circle again, and the boatman began to roar out a Gaelic song, to which they all stamped in time and repeated the chorus, which, as far as I could hear, sounded like "*at am Vaun ! at am Vaun !*" frequently repeated with prodigious enthusiasm. In another I could make out no intelligible sound but "Bar ! bar ! bar !" But the boatman's dark eyes were ready to start out of his head with rapture as he sang and stamped, and shook the handkerchief on each side, and the circle imitated.

Lady Scott is so exactly what I had heard her described, that it seemed as if we had seen her before. She must have been very handsome. French dark large eyes, civil and good-natured. Supper at a round table, a family supper, with attention to us, with sufficient and no more. The impression left on my mind this night is that Walter Scott is one of the best bred men I ever saw, with all the exquisite politeness which he knows so well

With Scott for Cicerone

how to describe, which is of no particular school or country, but which is of all countries, the politeness which arises from good and quick sense and jesting, which seems to know by instinct the characters of others, to see what will please, and put all his guests at their ease. As I sat beside him at supper, I could not believe he was a stranger, and forgot he was a great man. Mr. Lockhart is very handsome, quite unlike his picture in *Peter's Letters*.

When we wakened in the morning, the whole scene of the preceding night seemed like a dream ; however, at twelve came the real Lady Scott ; and we called for Scott at the Parliament House, who came out of the Courts with joyous face as if he had nothing on earth to do or to think of, but to show us Edinburgh. Seeming to enjoy it all as much as he could, he carried us to Parliament House, Advocates' Library, Castle, and Holyrood House. His conversation all the time better than anything we could see, full of *à propos* anecdote, historic, serious or comic, just as occasion called for it, and all with a *bonhomie* and an ease that made us forget it was any trouble even to his lameness to mount flights of eternal stairs. Chantrey's statues of Lord Melville and President Blair are admirable. There is another by Roubillac of Duncan Forbes, which is excellent. Scott is enthusiastic about the beauties of Edinburgh, and well he may be, the most magnificent as well as the most romantic of cities.

We dined with the dear good Alisons. Mr. Alison met me at the drawing-room door, took me in his arms and gave me a hearty hug, and I do not think he is much altered, only that his locks are silvered over. At the dinner were, besides his two sons and two daughters and Mr. Alison, Mr. and Mrs. Skene. In one of Scott's


“ Really too barefaced ”

introductions to *Marmion* you will find Mr. Skene, Mr. Hope, the Scotch Solicitor-General (it is curious the Solicitor-Generals of Scotland and Ireland should be Hope and Joy !), Mr. Brewster, and Lord Meadowbank, and Mrs. Maconachie his wife. Mr. Alison wanted me to sit beside everybody, and I wanted to sit by him, and this I accomplished ; on the other side was Mr. Hope, whose head and character you will find in *Peter's Letters* : he was very entertaining. Sophy sat beside Mr. Brewster, and had a great deal of conversation with him.

Next day, Sunday, went to hear Mr. Alison ; his fine voice but little altered. To me he appears the best preacher I have ever heard. Dined at Scott's ; only his own family, his friend Skene, his wife and daughter, and Sir Henry Stewart ; I sat beside Scott. I dare not attempt at this moment even to think of any of the anecdotes he told, the fragments of poetry he repeated, or the observations on national character he made, lest I should be tempted to write some of them for you, and should never end this letter, which must be ended some time or other. His strong affection for his early friends and his country gives a power and charm to his conversation, which cannot be given by the polish of the London world or by the habit of literary conversation. *Quentin Durward* was lying on the table. Mrs. Skene took it up and said, “ This is really too barefaced.” Scott, when pointing to the hospital built by Heriot, said, “ That was built by one Heriot, you know, the jeweller, in Charles the Second's time.”

There was an arch simplicity in his look, at which we could hardly forbear laughing.

Scott's Hospitable Castle

Miss Edgeworth visits Sir Walter at Abbotsford 

(To Mr. Ruxton)

ABBOTSFORD, *August 9, 1823*

I REMEMBER that you requested one of our party to write a few lines from Abbotsford. I think I mentioned to my aunt or Sophy the impression which I first experienced from Sir Walter Scott's great simplicity of manner, joined to his wonderful superiority of intellect. This impression has been strengthened by all I have seen of him since. In living with him in the country, I have particularly liked his behaviour towards his variety of guests, of all ranks, who came to his hospitable castle. Many of these are artists, painters, architects, mechanists, antiquarians, people who look up to him for patronage. None of them permitted to be hangers-on or parasites, and his manners are perfectly kind, courteous, yet such as to command respect; and I never heard any one attempt to flatter him. I never saw an author less of an author in his habits. This I early observed, but have been the more struck with it the longer I have been with him. He has, indeed, such variety of occupations, that he has not time to think of his own works; how he has time to write them is a wonder. You would like him for his love of trees: a great part of his time out of doors is taken up in pruning his trees. I have within this hour heard a gentleman say to him, "You have had a great deal of experience in planting, Sir Walter; do you advise much thinning or not?"

"I should advise much thinning, but little at a time. If you thin much at a time, you let in the wind and hurt your trees."

A Prophet in his own Country

I hope to show you a sketch of Abbotsford Sophy has made—better than my description.

Besides the abbey of Melrose, we have seen many interesting places in this neighbourhood.

To-day we have been a delightful drive through Ettrick Forest, and to the ruins of Newark—the hall of Newark, where the ladies bent their necks of snow to hear the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

Though great part of Ettrick Forest was cut down years ago, yet much of it has grown up again to respectable heights, and many most beautiful ash, oak, and alder trees remain. We had a happy walk by the river, and after refreshing ourselves with a luncheon in a summer-house, beautifully situated, we went to look at the ruins of Newark. It was a pity that this fine old building was let go to ruin, which it has done only within the last seventy years. The late Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, to whom it belonged, had in their youth lived abroad, and were so ignorant about their own estate in Scotland, that when they first came to live here they supposed there were no trees, and no wood they thought could be had, and brought with them, among other things, a barrel full of skewers for the cook.

It is very agreeable to observe how many friends of long-standing Scott has in the neighbourhood : they have been here, and we have been at their houses—very good houses, and the style of living excellent. Except one Prussian prince and one Swiss baron, no foreign visitors have been here ; indeed, the house is in such a state of painting and papering, and carpenters finishing new rooms and chasing the inhabitants out of the old, that it was impossible to have much company.




Sir Walter's eldest son was here for some days—now gone back to Sandhurst. He is excessively shy, very

Farewell to Abbotsford

handsome, not at all literary, but he has sense and honourable principles, and is very grateful to those who were kind to him in Ireland.

His younger brother, Charles, who is now at home, has more easy manners, is more conversible, and has more of his father's literary taste.

I am sorry to say we are to leave Abbotsford the day after to-morrow; but the longer we stay the more sorry we shall feel to go. We had intended to have paid a visit to Lady Selkirk at St. Mary's Isle, but this would be a hundred miles out of our way, and I have no time for it, which I regret, as I liked very much the little I saw of Lady Selkirk in London.

Dr. John Brown meets Thackeray   

28 RUTLAND STREET

December 1851 or January 1852

MY DEAR COVENTRY,—I wish you had been here for the last fortnight to have seen, heard, and known Thackeray,—a fellow after your own heart,—a strong-headed, sound-hearted, judicious fellow, who knew the things that differ, and prefers Pope to Longfellow, and Mrs. Barrett Browning and Milton to Mr. Festus, and Sir Roger de Coverley to *Pickwick*, and David Hume's *History* to Sheriff Alison's, and the verses by E. V. K. to his friend in town to anything he has seen for a long time; and "the impassioned grape" to the whole work, prosaic and poetical, of Sir Bulwer Lytton. I have seen a great deal of him, and talked with him on all sorts of things, and next to yourself I know no man so much to my mind. He is much better and greater than his works.

His lectures have been very well attended, and I hope

Praise of Thackeray

he will carry off £300. I wish he could have taken as much from Glasgow, but this may not be found possible. He was so curious about you after sending these verses, which he liked exceedingly. He is 6 feet 3 in height, with a broad kindly face and an immense skull. Do you remember Dr. Henderson of Galashiels? He is ludicrously like him,—the same big head and broad face,—his voice is very like, and the same nicety in expression and in the cadences of the voice. He makes no figure in company, except as very good-humoured, and by saying now and then a quietly strong thing. I so much wish you had met him. He is as much bigger than Dickens as a three-decker of one hundred and twenty guns is bigger than a small steamer with one long-range swivel-gun. He has set everybody here a-reading *Stella's Journal*, *Gulliver*, the *Tatler*, *Joseph Andrews*, and *Humphrey Clinker*. He has a great turn for politics, right notions, and keen desires, and from his kind of head would make a good public man. He has much in him which cannot find issue in mere authorship.—Yours ever affectionately,

J. B.

Thackeray praises Dickens to Mrs. Brookfield



Wednesday, 1849

WHAT have I been doing since these many days? I hardly know. I have written such a stupid number of *Pendennis* in consequence of not seeing you, that I shall be ruined if you are to stay away much longer . . . Has William written to you about our trip to Hampstead on Sunday? It was very pleasant. We went first to St. Mark's Church, where I always thought you went, but where the pew-opener had never heard of such a person

Praise of Dickens

as Mrs. J. O. B. ; and having heard a jolly and perfectly stupid sermon, walked over Primrose Hill to the Crowes, where his reverence gave Mrs. Crowe half an hour's private talk, whilst I was talking under the blossoming apple tree about newspapers to Monsieur Crowe. Well, Mrs. Crowe was delighted with William and his manner of *discoorsing* her ; and indeed, though I say it that shouldn't, from what he said afterwards, and from what we have often talked over pipes in private, that is a pious and kind soul. I mean his, and calculated to soothe and comfort and appreciate and elevate, so to speak, out of despair, many a soul that your more tremendous, rigorous divines would leave on the wayside, where sin, that robber, had left them half-killed. I will have a Samaritan parson when I fall among thieves. You, dear lady, may send for an ascetic if you like ; what is he to find wrong in you ?

I have talked to my mother about her going to Paris with the children ; she is very much pleased at the notion, and it won't be very lonely to me. I shall be alone for some months, at any rate,—and vow and swear I'll save money. . . .

Have you read Dickens ? O, it is charming ! brave Dickens ! It has some of the very prettiest touches—those inimitable Dickens touches which make such a great man of him ; and the reading of the book has done another author a great deal of good. In the first place, it pleases the other author to see that Dickens, who has long left off alluding to the O. A.'s works, has been copying the O. A., and greatly simplifying his style and overcoming the use of fine words. By this the public will be the gainer, and *David Copperfield* will be improved by taking a lesson from *Vanity Fair*. Secondly, it has put me upon my metal ; for ah ! madame, all the metal was out of me, and

Spedding's Forehead

I have been dreadfully and curiously cast down this month past. I say, secondly, it has put me on my metal, and made me feel I must do something; that I have fame and name and family to support. . .

Edward FitzGerald in a houseful of children



GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES

Sunday, May 22/42

MY DEAR LAURENCE,—I read of the advertisements of sales and auctions, but don't envy you Londoners while I am here in the midst of *green idleness*, as Leigh Hunt might call it.

What are pictures? I am all for pure spirit. You have, of course, read the account of Spedding's forehead landing in America.

English sailors hail it in the Channel, mistaking it for Beachy Head. There is a Shakespeare Cliff, and a Spedding Cliff.

Good old fellow! I hope he'll come back safe and sound, forehead and all. I sit writing this at my bedroom window, while the rain (long looked for) patters on the window. I prophesied it to-day, which is a great comfort. We have a housefull of the most delightful children: and if the rain would last, and the grass grow, all would be well. I think the rain will last. I shall prophesy so when I go down to our early dinner. For it is Sunday: and we dine children and all at one o'clock: and go to afternoon church, and a great tea at six—then a pipe (except for the young ladies)—a stroll—a bit of supper—and to bed. Wake in the morning at five—open the window and read Ecclesiasticus. A proverb says that “everything is fun in the country.” My Con-

Blake nearing Seventy

stable has been greatly admired, and is reckoned quite genuine by our great judge, Mr. Churchyard. Mr. C. paints himself: (not in *body* colours, as you waggishly insinuate) and nicely too. He understands Gainsborough, Constable, and old Crome. Have you ever seen pictures by the latter? some very fine. He was a Norwich man.

William Blake reports progress



(To George Cumberland)

April 12, 1827

I HAVE been very near the gates of death, and have returned very weak, and an old man, feeble and tottering, but not in spirit and life, not in the real man, the imagination, which liveth for ever. In that I am stronger and stronger, as this foolish body decays. I thank you for the pains you have taken with poor *Job*. I know too well that the great majority of Englishmen are fond of the indefinite, which they measure by Newton's doctrine of the fluxions of an atom, a thing which does not exist. These are politicians, and think that republican art is inimical to their atom, for a line or a lineament is not formed by chance. A line is a line in its minutest subdivisions, straight or crooked. It is itself, not intermeasurable by anything else. Such is *Job*. But since the French Revolution Englishmen are all intermeasurable by one another: certainly a happy state of agreement, in which I for one do not agree. God keep you and me from the divinity of yes, and no too—the yea, nay, creeping Jesus—from supposing up and down to be the same thing, as all experimentalists must suppose.

You are desirous, I know, to dispose of some of my works, but having none remaining of all I have printed,

Prophecies to Sell

I cannot print more except at a great loss. I am now painting a set of the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* for a friend at ten guineas. The last work I produced is a poem entitled *Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, but find that to print it will cost my time the amount of twenty guineas. One I have finished, but it is not likely I shall find a customer for it. As you wish me to send you a list with the prices, they are as follows :

	£	S.	D.
America	6	6	0
Europe	6	6	0
Visions, etc..	5	5	0
Thel	3	3	0
Songs of Innocence and Experience .	10	10	0
Urizen	6	6	0

The little Card I will do as soon as possible !

Edward FitzGerald describes his Sir Joshua  

1869

DEAR MRS. THOMPSON,—(I must get a new Pen for you—which doesn't promise to act as well as the old one—Try another).

Dear Mrs. Thompson—Mistress of Trinity—(this does better)—I am both sorry, and glad, that you wrote me the Letter you have written to me : sorry, because I think it was an effort to you, disabled as you are ; and glad, I need not say why.

I despatched Spedding's letter to your Master yesterday ; I daresay you have read it : for there was nothing extraordinary wicked in it. But, he to talk of *my* perversity ! . . .

“ My Sir Joshua is a darling ”

My Sir Joshua is a darling. A pretty young Woman (“ Girl ” I won’t call her) sitting with a turtle-dove in her lap, while its mate is supposed to be flying down to it from the window. I say “supposed,” for Sir J., who didn’t know much of the drawing of Birds, any more than of Men and Women, has made a thing like a stuffed Bird clawing down like a Parrot. But then, the colour, the Dove-colour, subdued so as to carry off the richer tints of the dear Girl’s dress ; and she, too, pensive, not sentimental : a Lady, as her Painter was a Gentleman.

Faded as it is in the face (the Lake, which he would use, having partially flown), it is one of the most beautiful things of his I have seen : more varied in colour ; not the simple cream-white dress he was fond of, but with a light gold-threaded Scarf, a blue sash, a green chair, etc. . . .

I was rather taken aback by the Master’s having discovered my last—yes, and *bond-fide* my last—translation in the volume I sent to your Library. I thought it would slip in unobserved, and I should have given all my little contributions to my old College, without after-reckoning. Had I known you as the Wife of any but the “quondam” Greek Professor, I should very likely have sent it to you : since it was meant for those who might wish for some insight into a Play which I must think they can scarcely have been tempted into before by any previous Translation. It remains to be much better done ; but if Women of Sense and Taste, and Men of Sense and Taste (who don’t know Greek) can read, and be interested in such a glimpse as I give them of the Original, they must be content, and not look the Horse too close in the mouth, till a better comes to hand.

My Lugger has had (along with her neighbours) such a Season of Winds as no one remembers. We made

Praise of FitzGerald

£450 in the North Sea ; and (just for fun) I did wish to realise £5 in my Pocket. But my Captain would take it all to pay Bills. But if he makes another £400 this Home Voyage ! Oh, then we shall have money in our Pockets. I do wish this. For the anxiety about all these People's lives has been so much more to me than all the amusement I have got from the Business, that I think I will draw out of it if I can see my Captain sufficiently firm on his legs to carry it on alone. True, there will then be the same risk to him and his ten men, but they don't care ; only I sit here listening to the Winds in the Chimney and always thinking of the eleven hanging at my own fingers' ends. This letter is all desperately about me and mine, Translations and Ships. And now I am going to walk in *my* Garden : and feed *my* Captain's Pony with white Carrots ; and in the Evening have my Lad come and read for an hour and a half (he stumbles at every third word, and gets dreadfully tired, and so do I ; but I renovate him with Cake and Sweet Wine, and I can't just now smoke the Pipe nor drink the Grog. "These are my Troubles, Mr. Wesley," but I am still the Master's and Mistress's loyal Servant,

EDWARD FITZGERALD¹

¹ There is an *ethos* in FitzGerald's letters which is so exquisitely idyllic as to be almost heavenly. He takes you with him, exactly accommodating his pace to yours, walks through meadows so tranquil, and yet abounding in the most delicate surprises. And these surprises seem so familiar, just as if they had originated with yourself. What delicious blending ! What a perfect interweft of thought and diction ! What a sweet companion !—*T. E. Brown to S. T. Irwin.*

XI

GUESTS AND THE PLAY

Macaulay describes his first visit to Holland House

LONDON, *June 1, 1831*

MY DEAR SISTER,—My last letter was a dull one. I mean this to be very amusing. My last was about Basinghall Street, attorneys, and bankrupts. But for this—take it dramatically in the German style.

Fine morning. Scene, the great entrance of Holland House

Enter MACAULAY and TWO FOOTMEN in livery

First Footman. Sir, may I venture to demand your name?

Macaulay. Macaulay, and thereto I add M.P.
And that addition, even in these proud halls,
May well ensure the bearer some respect.

Second Footman. And art thou come to breakfast with our Lord?

Macaulay. I am : for so his hospitable will,
And hers—the peerless dame ye serve—hath bade.

Lord and Lady Holland

First Footman. Ascend the stair, and thou above shalt find,

On snow-white linen spread, the luscious meal.

[*Exit MACAULAY upstairs*]

In plain English prose, I went this morning to breakfast at Holland House. The day was fine, and I arrived at twenty minutes after ten. After I had lounged a short time in the dining-room, I heard a gruff good-natured voice asking, "Where is Mr. Macaulay? Where have you put him?" and in his arm-chair Lord Holland was wheeled in. He took me round the apartments, he riding and I walking. He gave me the history of the most remarkable portraits in the library, where there is, by the bye, one of the few bad pieces of Lawrence that I have seen—a head of Charles James Fox, an ignominious failure. Lord Holland said that it was the worst ever painted of so eminent a man by so eminent an artist. There is a very fine head of Machiavelli, and another of Earl Grey, a very different sort of man. I observed a portrait of Lady Holland painted some thirty years ago. I could have cried to see the change. She must have been a most beautiful woman. She still looks, however, as if she had been handsome, and shows in one respect great taste and sense. She does not rouge at all; and her costume is not youthful, so that she looks as well in the morning as in the evening. We came back to the dining-room. Our breakfast party consisted of my Lord and Lady, myself, Lord Russell, and Luttrell. You must have heard of Luttrell. I met him once at Rogers's; and I have seen him, I think, in other places. He is a famous wit,—the most popular, I think, of all the professed wits,—a man who has lived in the highest circles, a scholar, and no contemptible poet. He wrote a little

Lady Holland's Dream

volume of verse entitled *Advice to Julia*, — not first rate, but neat, lively, piquant, and showing the most consummate knowledge of fashionable life.

We breakfasted on very good coffee, and very good tea, and very good eggs, butter kept in the midst of ice, and hot rolls. Lady Holland told us her dreams ; how she had dreamed that a mad dog bit her foot, and how she set off to Brodie, and lost her way in St. Martin's Lane, and could not find him. She hoped, she said, the dream would not come true. I said that I had had a dream which admitted of no such hope ; for I had dreamed that I heard Pollock speak in the House of Commons, that the speech was very long, and that he was coughed down. This dream of mine diverted them much.

After breakfast Lady Holland offered to conduct me to her own drawing-room, or, rather, commanded my attendance. A very beautiful room it is, opening on a terrace, and wainscotted with miniature paintings interesting from their merit, and interesting from their history. Among them I remarked a great many,—thirty I should think,—which even I, who am no great connoisseur, saw at once could come from no hand but Stothard's. They were all on subjects from Lord Byron's poems. "Yes," said she, "poor Lord Byron sent them to me a short time before the separation. I sent them back, and told him that, if he gave them away, he ought to give them to Lady Byron. But he said that he would not, and that, if I did not take them, the bailiffs would, and that they would be lost in the wreck." Her ladyship then honoured me so far as to conduct me through her dressing-room into the great family bedchamber, to show me a very fine picture by Reynolds, of Fox, when a boy, birds-nesting. She then

Napoleon and Rogers again

consigned me to Luttrell, asking him to show me the grounds.

Through the grounds we went, and very pretty I thought them. In the Dutch garden is a fine bronze bust of Napoleon, which Lord Holland put up in 1817, while Napoleon was a prisoner at St. Helena. The inscription was selected by his lordship, and is remarkably happy. It is from Homer's *Odyssey*. I will translate it, as well as I can extempore, into a measure which gives a better idea of Homer's manner than Pope's sing-song couplet.

“For not, be sure, within the grave
Is hid that prince, the wise, the brave;
But in an islet's narrow bound,
With the great Ocean roaring round,
The captive of a foeman base
He pines to view his native place.”

There is a seat near the spot which is called Rogers's seat. The poet loves, it seems, to sit there. A very elegant inscription by Lord Holland is placed over it :

“Here Rogers sate ; and here for ever dwell
With me those pleasures which he sang so well.”

Very neat and condensed, I think. Another inscription by Luttrell hangs there. Luttrell adjured me with mock pathos to spare his blushes ; but I am author enough to know what the blushes of authors mean. So I read the lines, and very pretty and polished they were, but too many to be remembered from one reading.

Having gone round the grounds I took my leave, very much pleased with the place. Lord Holland is extremely kind. But that is of course ; for he is kindness itself.

The H. H. Fright

Her ladyship too, which is by no means of course,¹ is all graciousness and civility. But, for all this, I would much rather be quietly walking with you ; and the great use of going to these fine places is to learn how happy it is possible to be without them. Indeed, I care so little for them that I certainly should not have gone to-day, but that I thought I should be able to find materials for a letter which you might like.—Farewell,

T. B. MACAULAY

Charles Lamb among the Blue-Stockings ∞ ∞

(To S. T. Coleridge)

Probably April 16 or 17, 1800

I SEND you, in this parcel, my play, which I beg you to present in my name, with my respect and love, to Wordsworth and his sister. You blame us for giving your direction to Miss Wesley ; the woman has been ten times after us about it, and we gave it her at last, under the idea that no further harm would ensue, but she would *once* write to you, and you would bite your lips and forget

¹ Lady Holland could be very terrifying. Sydney Smith has some good fun about it in a letter to Lady Ashburton in 1836 :—

“ Mr. and Mrs. ——— dined at ——— yesterday. I sat next to Mr. ———. His voice faltered and he looked pale : I did all I could to encourage him ; made him take quantities of sherry. Mrs. ——— also looked very unhappy, and I had no doubt took the H. H. draught when she went home. You know, perhaps, that there is a particular draught which the London apothecaries give to persons who have been frightened at H. H. They will both tell you that they were not at all frightened, but don't believe them ; I have seen so much of the disorder, that I am never mistaken. However, don't let me make you uneasy ; it generally goes off after a day or two, and rarely does any permanent injury to the constitution.”

“That mopsey, Miss Wesley ”

to answer it, and so it would end. You read us a dismal homily upon “Realities.” We know, quite as well as you do, what are shadows and what are realities. You, for instance, when you are over your fourth or fifth jorum, chirping about old school occurrences, are the best of realities. Shadows are cold, thin things, that have no warmth or grasp in them. Miss Wesley and her friend, and a tribe of authoresses that come after you here daily, and, in defect of you, hive and cluster upon us, are the shadows. You encouraged that mopsey, Miss Wesley, to dance after you, in the hope of having her nonsense put into a nonsensical Anthology. We have pretty well shaken her off, by that simple expedient of referring her to you ; but there are more burrs in the wind. I came home t’other day from business, hungry as a hunter, to dinner, with nothing, I am sure, of *the author but hunger* about me, and whom found I closeted with Mary but a friend of this Miss Wesley, one Miss Benje, or Benjey—I don’t know how she spells her name. I just came in time enough, I believe, luckily to prevent them from exchanging vows of eternal friendship. It seems she is one of your authoresses, that you first foster, and then upbraid us with. But I forgive you. “The rogue has given me potions to make me love him.” Well ; go she would not, nor step a step over our threshold, till we had promised to come and drink tea with her next night. I had never seen her before, and could not tell who the devil it was that was so familiar. We went, however, not to be impolite. Her lodgings are up two pairs of stairs in East Street. Tea and coffee, and macaroons—a kind of cake I much love. We sat down. Presently Miss Benje broke the silence, by declaring herself quite of a different opinion from D’Israeli, who supposes the differences of human intellect to be the mere effect of

Lamb in the Lionesses' Den

organisation. She begged to know my opinion. I attempted to carry it off with a pun upon organ ; but that went off very flat. She immediately conceived a very low opinion of my metaphysics ; and, turning round to Mary, put some question to her in French,—possibly having heard that neither Mary nor I understood French. The explanation that took place occasioned some embarrassment and much wondering. She then fell into an insulting conversation about the comparative genius and merits of all modern languages, and concluded with asserting that the Saxon was esteemed the purest dialect in Germany. From thence she passed into the subject of poetry ; where I, who had hitherto sat mute and a hearer only, humbly hoped I might now put in a word to some advantage, seeing that it was my own trade in a manner. But I was stopped by a round assertion, that no good poetry had appeared since Dr. Johnson's time. It seems the Doctor has suppressed many hopeful geniuses that way by the severity of his critical strictures in his *Lives of the Poets*. I here ventured to question the fact, and was beginning to appeal to *names*, but I was assured "it was certainly the case." Then we discussed Miss More's book on education, which I had never read. It seems Dr. Gregory, another of Miss Benjey's friends, has found fault with one of Miss More's metaphors. Miss More has been at some pains to vindicate herself—in the opinion of Miss Benjey, not without success. It seems the Doctor is invariably against the use of broken or mixed metaphor, which he reprobates against the authority of Shakespeare himself. We next discussed the question, whether Pope was a poet? I find Dr. Gregory is of opinion he was not, though Miss Seward does not at all concur with him in this. We then sat upon the comparative merits of the ten translations of

“A Canon at the Opera!”

Pizarro, and Miss Benje or Benje advised Mary to take two of them home ; she thought it might afford her some pleasure to compare them *verbatim* ; which we declined. It being now nine o'clock, wine and macaroons were again served round, and we parted, with a promise to go again next week, and meet the Miss Porters, who, it seems have heard much of Mr. Coleridge, and wish to meet *us*, because we are *his* friends. I have been preparing for the occasion. I crowd cotton in my ears. I read all the reviews and magazines of the past month against the dreadful meeting, and I hope by these means to cut a tolerable second-rate figure.

The Rev. Sydney Smith declines two invitations 

I

(To Mrs. Meynell)

GREEN STREET, *June*, 1840

THY servant is threescore-and-ten years old ; can he hear the sound of singing men and singing women ? A Canon at the Opera ! Where have you lived ? In what habitations of the heathen ? I thank you, shuddering ; and am ever your unseducible friend,

SYDNEY SMITH

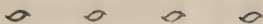
II

ENGAGED, my dear Miss Berry, up to the teeth on Saturday, or should be too happy. It gives me great comfort that you are recovered. I would not have survived you. To precipitate myself from the pulpit of Paul was the peculiar mode of destruction on which I had resolved.—Ever yours,

SYDNEY SMITH

“Once is Enough”

Cicero entertains Cæsar



(To Atticus)

O THIS visitor so much dreaded! And yet one whose visit I am not sorry to have received; for it went off most pleasantly.

When we came the evening before, on the 18th, to my neighbour Philippus, the house was so crowded with soldiers, that there was hardly a vacant room for Cæsar to sup in. There were about two thousand of them, which made me feel no little uneasiness for the next day. But Barba Cussius set me at ease. He assigned me a guard; made the rest encamp in the fields; so that my house was kept clear. On the 19th, he staid with Philippus till 1 o'clock; but admitted nobody. He was settling accounts, as I suppose, with Balbus. He then walked by the shore to my house. At two he took the bath. The verses on Mamuna were then read to him. His countenance was unchanged. He was rubbed, and anointed, and then he disposed himself at table, after taking an emetic; and ate and drank in a very free and easy manner; for he was entertained hospitably and elegantly; and our discourse resembled our repast in its relish and seasoning.


Besides Cæsar's table, his attendants were well provided for in three other rooms; nor was there any deficiency in the provision made for his freedmen of lower quality, and his slaves; but those of the better sort were elegantly entertained. Need I add more. I acted as man with man. Yet he was not the man to whom one would say at parting, "I pray let me have this visit repeated when you come this way again." Once is enough. Not a word passed between us on business, but much literary talk. To make short of the

“He crackled delicately”

matter, he was perfectly pleased and easy. He talked of spending one day at Puteoli ; another at Baiæ. You have thus the account of the day's entertainment—an entertainment not agreeable, but still not troublesome to me. I shall stay here a little longer, and then to Tusculum.

As he passed by Dolabella's villa, his troops marched close by the side of this house, on the right and left ; which was done nowhere else.

I had this from Nicias.

Charles Lamb returns thanks for a little pig  

(To Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Collier)

Twelfth Day [January 6], 1823

THE pig was above my feeble praise. It was a dear pigmy.

There was some contention as to who should have the ears, but in spite of his obstinacy (deaf as these little creatures are to advice) I contrived to get at one of them.

It came in boots too, which I took as a favour. Generally those petty toes, pretty toes ! are missing. But I suppose he wore them, to look taller.

He must have been the least of his race. His little foots would have gone into the silver slipper. I take him to have been Chinese, and a female.—

If Evelyn could have seen him, he would never have farrowed two such prodigious volumes, seeing how much good can be contained in—how small a compass !

He crackled delicately.

John Collier junr. has sent me a Poem which (without

“The Smack of that little Ear”

the smallest bias from the aforesaid present, believe me) I pronounce *sterling*.

I set about Evelyn, and finished the first volume in the course of a natural day. To-day I attack the second.—Parts are very interesting.—

I left a blank at top of my letter, not being determined *which* to address it to, so Farmer and Farmer's wife will please to divide our thanks. May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbours lean, and your labourers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the day is long !

VIVE L'AGRICULTURE !

Frank Field's marriage of course you have seen in the papers, and that his brother Barron is expected home.

How do you make your pigs so little?

They are vastly engaging at that age.

I was so myself.

Now I am a disagreeable old hog—

A middle-aged-gentleman-and-a-half.

My faculties, thank God, are not much impaired. I have my sight, hearing, taste, pretty perfect ; and can read the Lord's Prayer in the common type, by the help of a candle, without making many mistakes.

Believe me, while my faculties last, a proper appreciator of your many kindnesses in this way ; and that the last lingering relish of past flavours upon my dying memory will be the smack of that little Ear. It was the left ear, which is lucky. Many happy returns (not of the Pig) but of the New Year to both.—

Mary for her share of the Pig and the memoirs desires to send the same -Dear Mr. C. and Mrs. C.—Yours truly,

C. LAMB

A Banquet indeed

Pliny tells Septitius Clarus what he has missed



HOW happened it, my friend, that you did not keep your engagement the other night to sup with me? But take notice, justice is to be had, and I expect you shall fully reimburse me the expense I was at to treat you ; which, let me tell you, was no small sum. I had prepared, you must know, a lettuce apiece, three snails, two eggs, and a barley cake, with some sweet wine and snow ; the snow most certainly I shall charge to your account, as a rarity that will not keep. Besides all these curious dishes, there were olives of Andalusia, gourds, shalots, and a hundred other dainties equally sumptuous. You should likewise have been entertained either with an interlude, the rehearsal of a poem, or a piece of music, as you liked best ; or (such was my liberality) with all three. But the luxurious delicacies and Spanish dancers of a certain—I know not who, were, it seems, more to your taste. However, I shall have my revenge of you, depend upon it ;—in what manner, shall be at present a secret. In good truth it was not kind thus to mortify your friend,—I had almost said yourself ;—and, upon second thoughts, I do say so : for how agreeably should we have spent the evening, in laughing, trifling, and deep speculation ! You may sup, I confess, at many places more splendidly ; but you can nowhere be treated with more unconstrained cheerfulness, simplicity and freedom ; only make the experiment ; and if you do not ever afterwards prefer my table to any other, never favour me with your company again. Farewell.

A Piece at the Ambigu

The Rev. Sydney Smith thanks Mr. Arthur Kinglake
for a book, and enlarges on digestion ♪ ♪

COMBE FLOREY, *September 30, 1837*

DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by the present of
your brother's book. I am convinced digestion is
the great secret of life ; and that character, talents,
virtues, and qualities are powerfully affected by beef,
mutton, pie-crust, and rich soups. I have often thought
I could feed or starve men into many virtues and vices,
and affect them more powerfully with my instruments
of cookery than Timotheus could do formerly with his
lyre.—Ever yours very truly, SYDNEY SMITH

Charles Dickens at a French melodrama ♪ ♪

49 CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS

Monday, January 7, 1856

MY DEAR MARK [LEMON],—In a piece at the
Ambigu, called the *Rentrée à Paris*, a mere scene in
honour of the return of the troops from the Crimea the other
day, there is a novelty which I think it worth letting you
know of, as it is easily available, either for a serious or a
comic interest—the introduction of a supposed electric tele-
graph. The scene is the railway terminus at Paris, with the
electric telegraph office on the prompt side, and the clerks
with their backs to the audience—much more real than if
they were, as they infallibly would be, staring about the
house—working the needles ; and the little bell perpetu-
ally ringing. There are assembled to greet the soldiers,
all the easily and naturally imagined elements of interest
—old veteran fathers, young children, agonised mothers,
sisters and brothers, girl lovers—each impatient to know

“The Brave Electric Telegraph”

of his or her own object of solicitude. Enter to these a certain marquis, full of sympathy for all, who says : “ My friends, I am one of you. My brother has no commission yet. He is a common soldier. I wait for him as well as all brothers and sisters here wait for *their* brothers. Tell me whom you are expecting.” Then they all tell him. Then he goes into the telegraph-office ; and sends a message down the line to know how long the troops will be. Bell rings. Answer handed out on slip of paper. “ Delay on the line. Troops will not arrive for a quarter of an hour.” General disappointment. “ But we have this brave electric telegraph, my friends,” says the marquis. “ Give me your little messages, and I’ll send them off.” General rush round the marquis. Exclamations : “ How’s Henri ? ” “ My love to Georges ; ” “ Has Guillaume forgotten Elise ? ” “ Is my son wounded ? ” “ Is my brother promoted ? ” etc. etc. Marquis composes’tumult. Sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“ Elise’s love to Georges.” Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—“ Georges in ten minutes will embrace his Elise. Sends her a thousand kisses.” Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“ Is my son wounded ? ” Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—“ No. He has not yet upon him those marks of bravery in the glorious service of his country which his dear old father bears ” (father being lamed and invalided). Last of all the widowed mother. Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“ Is my only son safe ? ” Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—“ He was first upon the heights of Alma.” General cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “ He was made a sergeant at Inkermann.” Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “ He was made colour-sergeant at Sebastopol.” Another cheer

Paris under Mud

Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. "He was the first man who leaped with the French banner on the Malakhoff tower." Tremendous cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. "But he was struck down there by a musket-ball, and—— Troops have proceeded. Will arrive in half a minute after this." Mother abandons all hope; general commiseration; troops rush in, down a platform; son only wounded, and embraces her.

As I have said, and as you will see, this is available for any purpose. But done with equal distinction and rapidity, it is a tremendous effect, and got by the simplest means in the world. There is nothing in the piece, but it was impossible not to be moved and excited by the telegraph part of it.

I have written to Beaucourt about taking that breezy house—a little improved—for the summer, and I hope you and yours will come there often and stay there long. My present idea, if nothing should arise to uproot me sooner, is to stay here until the middle of May, then plant the family at Boulogne, and come with Catherine and Georgy home for two or three weeks.

We are up to our knees in mud here. Literally in vehement despair, I walked down the avenue outside the Barrière de l'Étoile here yesterday, and went straight on among the trees. I came back with top-boots of mud on. Nothing will cleanse the streets.

Numbers of men and women are for ever scooping and sweeping in them, and they are always one lake of yellow mud. All my trousers go to the tailor's every day, and are ravelled out at the heels every night. Washing is awful.

Tell Mrs. Lemon, with my love, that I have bought her some Eau D'Or, in grateful remembrance of her

Gin and Fortitude

knowing what it is, and crushing the tyrant of her existence by resolutely refusing to be put down when that monster would have silenced her. You may imagine the loves and messages that are now being poured in upon me by all of them, so I will give none of them ; though I am pretending to be very scrupulous about it, and am looking (I have no doubt) as if I were writing them down with the greatest care.—Ever affectionately.

Thackeray describes to Mrs. Brookfield his adventures
in a Paris theatre ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

PARIS, *Tuesday, September 4, 1849*

PERHAPS [through] my intolerable meanness and blundering, you will not get any letter from me till to-morrow. On Sunday, the man who was to take the letter failed me ; yesterday I went with it in a cab to the Grande Poste, which is a mile off, and where you have to go to pay. The cab-horse was lame, and we arrived two minutes too late ; I put the letter into the unpaid letter-box ; I dismissed the poor old broken cab-horse, behind which it was agonizing to sit ; in fine it was a failure

When I got to dinner at my aunt's, I found all was over. Mrs. H. died on Sunday night in her sleep, quite without pain, or any knowledge of the transition. I went and sat with her husband, an old fellow of seventy-two, and found him bearing his calamity in a very honest manly way. What do you think the old gentleman was doing ? Well, he was drinking gin and water, and I had some too, telling his valet to make me some. Man thought this was a master stroke of diplomacy, and evidently thinks I have arrived to take possession as heir, but I know nothing about

Small Talk from Paris

money matters as yet, and think that the old gentleman at least will have the enjoyment of my aunt's property during life. He told me some family secrets, in which persons of repute figure not honorably. Ah! they shock me to think of. Pray, have you ever committed any roguery in money matters? Has William? Have I? I am more likely to do it than he, that honest man, not having his resolution or self-denial. But I've not as yet, beyond the roguery of not saving perhaps, which is knavish too. I am very glad I came to see my dearest old aunt. She is such a kind tender creature, laws bless us, how fond she would be of you. I was going to begin about William and say "Do you remember a friend of mine who came to dine at the Thermes; and sang the song about the Mogul, and the blue bottle fly?" but modesty forbade, and I was dumb.

Since this was written in the afternoon, I suppose if there has been one virtuous man in Paris, it is madame's most *obajient* servant. I went to sit with Mr. H., and found him taking what he calls his tiffin in great comfort (tiffin is the meal which I have sometimes had the honour of sharing with you at one o'clock) and this transacted, — and I didn't have any tiffin; having consumed a good breakfast two hours previously—I went up a hundred stairs at least, to Miss B. H's airy apartment, and found her and her sister, and sat for an hour—she asked after you so warmly that I was quite pleased; she said she had the highest respect for you. I was glad to find somebody who knew you; and all I can say is, if you fancy I like being here better than in London, you are in a pleasing error.

Then I went to see a friend of my mother's, then to have a very good dinner at the Café de Paris, where

Panting for Dumas

I had *potage à la pourpart*, think of *pourpart* soup. We had it merely for the sake of the name, and it was uncommonly good. Then back to old H. again, to bawl into his ears for an hour and a half; then to drink tea with my aunt—why, life has been a series of sacrifices to-day, and I must be written up in the book of good works. For I should have liked to go to the play, and follow my own devices best, but for that stern sentiment of duty, which fitfully comes over the most abandoned of men at times.

All the time I was with Mr. H. in the morning, what do you think they were doing in the next room? It was like a novel. They were rapping at a coffin in the bedroom, but he was too deaf to hear, and seems too old to care very much. Ah! dear lady, I hope you are sleeping happily at this hour, and you and Mr. Williams, and another party who is nameless, shall have all the benefits of an old sinner's prayers.

I suppose I was too virtuous on Tuesday, for yesterday I got back to my old selfish ways again, and did what I liked from morning till night.

This self-indulgence though entire was not criminal; at first at least, but I shall come to the painful part of my memoirs presently. All the forenoon I read with intense delight, a novel called *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne*, a continuation of the famous *Mousquetaires* and just as interesting; keeping me panting from volume to volume, and longing for more.

This done, and after a walk and some visits, read more novels, *David Copperfield* to wit, in which there is a charming bit of insanity, and which I begin to believe is the very best thing the author has yet done. Then to the *Variétés* Theatre, to see the play *Chamellon*, after which all Paris is running, a general satire upon

W. M. T. behind the Scenes

the last 60 years. Everything is satirised, Louis XVI., the Convention, the Empire, the Restoration, etc.; the barricades, at which these people were murdering each other only yesterday—it's awful, immodest, surpasses my cynicism altogether. At the end of the piece they pretend to bring in the author, and a little child who can just speak, comes in and sings a satiric song, in a feeble, tender, infantine pipe, which seemed to me as impious as the whole of the rest of the piece. They don't care for anything, not religion, not bravery, not liberty, not great men, not modesty. Ah! madame, what a great moralist somebody is, and what *moighty foine* principles *entoiirely* he has!

But now, with a blush upon my damask cheek, I come to the adventures of the day. You must know that I went to the play with an old comrade, Roger de Beauvoir, an ex-dandy and man of letters, who talked incessantly during the whole of dinner-time, as I remember, though I can't for the life of me recall what he said. Well, we went together to the green-room. I have never been in a French green-room before, and was not much excited, but when he proposed to take me to the *loge* of a beautiful actress with sparkling eyes and the prettiest little *retroussé* nosey-posey in the world, I said to the *régisseur* of the theatre, "lead on!" and we went through passages and upstairs to the *loge*, which is not a box, but O! gracious goodness, a dressing room!—

She had just taken off her rouge, her complexion was only a thousand times more brilliant, perhaps the *peignoir* of black satin which partially enveloped her perfect form, only served to heighten etc., which it could but partially do etc. Her lips are really as red as etc., and not covered with paint at all. Her voice

The Actress's Invitation

is delicious. Her eyes O! they flashed etc. upon me, and I felt my etc. beating so that I could hardly speak. I pitched in, if you will permit me the phrase, two or three compliments however, very large and heavy, of the good only English sort, and O! *mon dieu* she has asked me to go and see her. Shall I go, or shan't I? Shall I go this very day at 4 o'clock or shall I not? Well, I won't tell you, I will put up my letter before 4, and keep this piece of intelligence for the next packet.

The funeral takes place to-morrow, and as I don't seem to do much work here, I shall be soon probably on the wing, but perhaps I will take a week's touring somewhere about France, Tours, and Nantes perhaps or elsewhere, or anywhere, I don't know, but I hope before I go to hear once more from you. I am happy indeed to hear how well you are. What a shame it was to assault my dear lady with my blue devils. Who could help looking to the day of failing powers, but if I last a few years, no doubt I can get a shelter somewhere against that certain adversity, and so I ought not to show you my glum face or my dismal feelings. That's the worst of habit and confidence. You are so kind to me that I like to tell you all, and to think that in good or ill fortune I have your sympathy. Here's an opportunity for sentiment, here's just a little bit of the page left to say something neat and pretty.

Je les méprise les jolis mots, vous en ai-je jamais fait de ma vie? Je les laisse à Monsieur Bullar et ses pareils—j'en ferai pour Mademoiselle Page, pour la ravissante la sémillante la frétilante Adèle (c'est ainsi qu'elle se nomme) mais pour vous? Allons—partons—il est quatre heures—fermons la lettre—disons adieu, l'amie et moi—vous m'écrirez avant mon départ n'est-

Elia as Ariel

ce-pas? Allez bien, dormez bien, marchez bien, s'il vous plait, et gardy mwaw ung petty moreso der voter cure.

W. M. T.

Charles Lamb confesses to a night of it



(To Dr. Asbury)

DEAR SIR,—It is an observation of a wise man that “moderation is best in all things.” I cannot agree with him “in liquor.” There is a smoothness and oiliness in wine that makes it go down by a natural channel, which I am positive was made for that descending. Else, why does not wine choke us? could Nature have made that sloping lane, not to facilitate the down-going? She does nothing in vain. You know that better than I. You know how often she has helped you at a dead lift, and how much better entitled she is to a fee than yourself sometimes, when you carry off the credit. Still there is something due to manners and customs, and I should apologise to you and Mrs. Asbury for being absolutely carried home upon a man’s shoulders thro’ Silver Street, up Parson’s Lane, by the Chapels (which might have taught me better), and then to be deposited like a dead log at Gaffar Westwood’s, who it seems does not “insure” against intoxication. Not that the mode of conveyance is objectionable. On the contrary, it is more easy than a one-horse chaise. Ariel in the *Tempest* says

“On a Bat’s back do I fly, after sunset merrily.”

Now I take it that Ariel must sometimes have stayed out late of nights. Indeed, he pretends that “where

“And what is Reason?”

the bee sucks, there lurks he,” as much as to say that his suction is as innocent as that little innocent (but damnably stinging when he is provok’d) winged creature. But I take it, that Ariel was fond of metheglin, of which the Bees are notorious Brewers. But then you will say: What a shocking sight to see a middle-aged gentleman-and-a-half riding upon a Gentleman’s back up Parson’s Lane at midnight! Exactly the time for that sort of conveyance, when nobody can see him, nobody but Heaven and his own conscience; now Heaven makes fools, and don’t expect much from her own creation; and as for conscience, She and I have long since come to a compromise. I have given up false modesty, and she allows me to abate a little of the true. I like to be liked, but I don’t care about being respected. I don’t respect myself. But, as I was saying, I thought he would have let me down just as we got to Lieutenant Barker’s Coal-shed (or emporium), but by a cunning jerk I eased myself, and righted my posture. I protest, I thought myself in a palanquin, and never felt myself so grandly carried. It was a slave under me. There was I, all but my reason. And what is reason? and what is the loss of it? and how often in a day do we do without it, just as well? Reason is only counting, two and two makes four. And if on my passage home, I thought it made five, what matter? Two and two will just make four, as it always did, before I took the finishing glass that did my business. My sister has begged me to write an apology to Mrs. A. and you for disgracing your party; now it does seem to me, that I rather honoured your party, for every one that was not drunk (and one or two of the ladies, I am sure, were not) must have been set off greatly in the contrast to me. I was the

The End is All

scapegoat. The soberer they seemed. By the way, is magnesia good on these occasions? *iii* pol : med : sum : ante noct : in rub : can :. I am no licentiate, but know enough of simples to beg you to send me a draught after this model. But still you will say (or the men and maids at your house will say) that it is not a seemly sight for an old gentleman to go home pick-a-back. Well, may be it is not. But I never studied grace. I take it to be a mere superficial accomplishment. I regard more the internal acquisitions. The great object after supper is to get home, and whether that is obtained in a horizontal posture or perpendicular (as foolish men and apes affect for dignity), I think is little to the purpose. The end is always greater than the means. Here I am, able to compose a sensible rational apology, and what signifies how I got here? I have just sense enough to remember I was very happy last night, and to thank our kind host and hostess, and that's sense enough, I hope.

CHARLES LAMB

N.B.—What is good for a desperate head-ache? Why, patience, and a determination not to mind being miserable all day long. And that I have made my mind up to. So, here goes. It is better than not being alive at all, which I might have been, had your man toppled me down at Lieut. Barker's Coal-shed. My sister sends her sober compliments to Mrs. A. She is not much the worse.—Yours truly,

C. LAMB

More Epistolary *Sententiae*

REMEMBER my unalterable maxim, when we love, we have always something to say.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU

THE English do not generally love Letter writing : and very few of us like it the more as we get older.






EDWARD FITZGERALD

7½ P.M.—After a stroll in mine own Garden, under the moon—shoes kicked off—Slippers and Dressing Gown on—a Pinch of Snuff—and hey for a Letter—to my only London Correspondent !

IBID.

I HAVE a constancy in my nature that makes me always remember my old friends.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU




A Conclusion      

(Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu)

YOUR will be done ! but God send it may be the same with mine.

XII

HUMOURISTS AND ODDITIES

The Ladies' Battle, in four letters   

(Lady Seymour, the Queen of Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament and R. B. Sheridan's granddaughter, and Lady Shuckburgh exchange notes as to Mary Steadman)

I

LADY SEYMOUR presents her compliments to Lady Shuckburgh, and would be obliged to her for the character of Mary Steadman, who states that she has lived twelve months, and still is, in Lady Shuckburgh's establishment. Can Mary Steadman cook plain dishes well, and make bread, and is she honest, sober, willing, cleanly, and good tempered? Lady Seymour will also like to know the reason she leaves Lady Shuckburgh's house. Direct under care to Lord Seymour, Meriden Bradley, Wiltshire.

II

Lady Shuckburgh presents her compliments to Lady Seymour ; her ladyship's letter, dated October 28th, only

Seymour v. Shuckburgh

reached her yesterday, November 3rd. Lady Shuckburgh was unacquainted with the name of the kitchen-maid until mentioned by Lady Seymour, as it is her custom neither to apply for, nor give, characters to any of the under servants, this being always done by the housekeeper, Mrs. Couch, and this was well known to the young woman. Therefore Lady Shuckburgh is surprised at her referring any lady to her for a character. Lady Shuckburgh, keeping a professed cook, as well as a housekeeper, in her establishment, it is not very probable she herself should know anything of the abilities or merits of the under servants, she is therefore unable to reply to Lady Seymour's note. Lady Shuckburgh cannot imagine Mary Steadman to be capable of cooking anything, except for the servants' hall table. November 4th.

III

Lady Seymour presents her compliments to Lady Shuckburgh, and begs she will order her housekeeper, Mrs. Couch, to send the girl's character, otherwise another young woman will be sought for elsewhere, as Lady Seymour's children cannot remain without their dinners because Lady Shuckburgh, keeping a professed cook and housekeeper, thinks a knowledge of the details of her establishment beneath her notice. Lady Seymour understands from Steadman that, in addition to her other talents, she was actually capable of cooking food for the little Shuckburghs to partake of when hungry.

IV

MADAM,—Lady Shuckburgh has directed me to acquaint you that she declines answering your note, the

The Death of Amos Cottle

vulgarity of which she thinks beneath her contempt, and although it may be characteristic of the Sheridans to be vulgar, coarse, and witty, it is not that of a lady, unless she chances to have been *born in a garret and bred in a kitchen*. Mary Steadman informs me that your ladyship does not keep either a cook or housekeeper, and that you only require a girl who can cook a mutton chop; if so, I apprehend that Mary Steadman, or any *other scullion*, will be found fully equal to the establishment of the Queen of Beauty.—I am, Madam, your Ladyship's etc. etc.,

ELIZABETH COUCH

Charles Lamb softens the loss of a brother ♪ ♪

(To Coleridge)

October 9, 1800

I SUPPOSE you have heard of the death of Amos Cottle.

I paid a solemn visit of condolence to his brother, accompanied by George Dyer, of burlesque memory. I went, trembling to see poor Cottle so immediately upon the event.

He was in black; and his younger brother was also in black.

Everything wore an aspect suitable to the respect due to the freshly dead. For some time after our entrance, nobody spoke till George modestly put in a question, whether *Alfred* was likely to sell.

This was *Lethe* to Cottle, and his poor face, wet with tears, and his kind eye brightened up in a moment. Now I felt it was my cue to speak.

I had to thank him for a present of a magnificent

Beslabbering "Alfred"

copy, and had promised to send him my remarks,—the least thing I could do ; so I ventured to suggest, that I perceived a considerable improvement he had made in his first book since the state in which he first read it to me. Joseph until now had sat with his knees cowering in by the fire-place, and with great difficulty of body shifted the same round to the corner of a table where I was sitting, and first stationing one thigh over the other, which is his sedentary mood, and placidly fixing his benevolent face right against mine, waited my observations.

At that moment it came strongly into my mind, that I had got Uncle Toby before me, he looked so kind and good.

I could not say an unkind thing of *Alfred*. So I set my memory to work to recollect what was the name of Alfred's Queen, and with some adroitness recalled the well-known sound to Cottle's ears of Alswitha.

At that moment I could perceive that Cottle had forgot his brother was so lately become a blessed spirit. In the language of mathematicians, the author was as 9, the brother as 1.

I felt my cue, and strong pity working at the root I went to work, and beslabbered *Alfred* with most unqualified praise, or only qualifying my praise by the occasional politic interposition of an exception taken against trivial faults, slips, and human imperfections, which, by removing the appearance of insincerity, did but in truth heighten the relish.

Perhaps I might have spared that refinement, for Joseph was in a humour to hope and believe *all things*.

What I said was beautifully supported, corroborated and confirmed by the stupidity of his brother on my left hand, and by George on my right, who has an utter

“All Men are Fine Geniuses”

incapacity of comprehending that there can be anything bad in poetry.

All poems are *good* poems to George ; all men are *fine geniuses*.

So what with my actual memory, of which I made the most, and Cottle's own helping me out, for I had really forgotten a good deal of *Alfred*, I made shift to discuss the most essential parts entirely to the satisfaction of its author, who repeatedly declared that he loved nothing better than *candid* criticism. Was I a candid greyhound now for all this? or did I do right? I believe I did. The effect was luscious to my conscience.

For all the rest of the evening Amos was no more heard of, till George revived the subject by inquiring whether some account should not be drawn up by the friends of the deceased to be inserted in Phillips' Monthly Obituary ; adding, that Amos was estimable both for his head and heart, and would have made a fine poet if he had lived.

To the expediency of this measure Cottle fully assented, but could not help adding that he always thought that the qualities of his brother's heart exceeded those of his head.

I believe his brother, when living, had formed precisely the same idea of him ; and I apprehend the world will assent to both judgments.

I rather guess that the brothers were poetical rivals. I judged so when I saw them together.

Poor Cottle, I must leave him after his short dream to muse again upon his poor brother, for whom I am sure in secret he will yet shed many a tear. Now send me in return some Greta News.

C. L.

At Weston Underwood

William Cowper receives a visitor, and becomes a prophet in his own country ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Lady Hesketh)

THE LODGE, *November 27, 1787*

IT is the part of wisdom, my dearest cousin, to sit down contented under the demands of necessity, because they are such.

I am sensible that you cannot in my uncle's present infirm state, and of which it is not possible to expect any considerable amendment, indulge either us, or yourself, with a journey to Weston. Yourself I say, both because I know it will give you pleasure to see *Causidice mi*¹ once more, especially in the comfortable abode where you have placed him, and because after so long an imprisonment in London, you who love the country and have a taste for it, would of course be glad to return to it. For my own part, to me it is ever new, and though I have now been an inhabitant of this village a twelvemonth, and have during the half of that time been at liberty to expatiate, and to make discoveries, I am daily finding out fresh scenes and walks, which you would never be satisfied with enjoying—some of them are unapproachable by you either on foot or in your carriage. Had you twenty toes (whereas I suppose you have but ten) you could not reach them; and coach wheels have never been seen there since the flood. Before it indeed, (as Burnet says that the earth was then perfectly free from all inequalities in its surface), they might have been seen there every day. We have other walks both upon hill-tops and in valleys beneath, some of which by the help

¹ The appellation which Sir Thomas Hesketh used to give him in jest, when he was of the Temple.—*Southey's note.*

The Bills of Mortality

of your carriage, and many of them without its help, would be always at your command.

On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me.

I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and being desired to sit, spoke as follows : " Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All-Saints, in Northampton ; brother of Mr. Cox the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You would do me a great favour, sir, if you would furnish me with one."

To this I replied : " Mr. Cox, you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, Cox the statuary, who, everybody knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose."

" Alas ! sir, I have heretofore borrowed help from him, but he is a gentleman of so much reading, that the people of our town cannot understand him."

I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, Perhaps, my good friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason. But on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my Muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him.

The waggon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the

The Dainty Beggar

mortuary style. A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals ! I have written *one*, that serves *two hundred* persons.

A few days since I received a very obliging letter from Mr. Mackenzie. He tells me that his own papers, which are by far, he is sorry to say it, the most numerous, are marked V.I.Z.

Accordingly, my dear, I am happy to find that I am engaged in a correspondence with Mr. Viz, a gentleman for whom I have always entertained the profoundest veneration. But the serious fact is, that the papers distinguished by those signatures have ever pleased me most, and struck me as the work of a sensible man, who knows the world well, and has more of Addison's delicate humour than anybody.

A poor man begged food at the Hall lately. The cook gave him some vermicelli soup. He ladled it about some time with the spoon, and then returned it to her, saying, "I am a poor man, it is true, and I am very hungry, but yet I cannot eat broth with maggots in it."

Once more, my dear, a thousand thanks for your box full of good things, useful things, and beautiful things.—
Yours ever, W. C.

A Parish Clerk thinks better of it, and withdraws
his threats 

DEAR AND REV. SIR,—I avail myself of the opportunity of troubling your honour with these lines, which I hope you will excuse, which is the very sentiments of your humble servant's heart. Ignorantly, rashly, but reluctantly, I gave you warning to leave your highly respected office and most amiable duty, as being your

Questions and Answers

servant, and clerk of this your most well wished parish, and place of my succour and support.

But, dear Sir, I well know it was no fault of yours nor from any of my most worthy parishioners. It were because I thought I were not sufficiently paid for the interments of the silent dead. But will I be a Judas and leave the house of my God, the place where His Honour dwelleth for a few pieces of money? No. Will I be a Peter and deny myself of an office in His Sanctuary and cause me to weep bitterly? No. Can I be so unreasonable as to deny, if I like and am well, to ring that solemn bell that speaks the departure of a soul? No. Can I leave digging the tombs of my neighbours and acquaintances which have many a time made me shudder and think of my mortality, when I have dug up the mortal remains of some perhaps as I well knew? No. And can I so abruptly forsake the service of my beloved Church of which I have not failed to attend every Sunday for these seven and a half years? No. Can I leave waiting upon you a minister of that Being that sitteth between the Cherubim and flieth upon the wings of the wind? No. Can I leave the place where our most holy services nobly calls forth and says, "Those whom God have joined together" (and being as I am a married man) "let no man put asunder"? No. And can I leave that ordinance where you say then and there "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," and he becomes regenerate and is grafted into the body of Christ's Church? No. And can I think of leaving off cleaning at Easter the House of God in which I take such delight, in looking down her aisles and beholding her sanctuaries and the table of the Lord? No. And can I forsake taking part in the service of Thanksgiving of women after childbirth, when mine own

Complete Surrender

wife has been delivered ten times? No. And can I leave off waiting on the congregation of the Lord which you well know, Sir, is my delight? No. And can I forsake the Table of the Lord at which I have feasted I suppose some thirty times? No. And, dear Sir, can I ever forsake you who have been so kind to me? No. And I well know you will not entreat me to leave, neither to return from following after you, for where you pray there will I pray, where you worship there will I worship. Your Church shall be my Church, your people shall be my people and your God my God. By the waters of Babylon am I to sit down and weep and leave thee, O my Church! and hang my harp upon the trees that grow therein? No. One thing have I desired of the Lord that I will require even that I may dwell in the House of the Lord and to visit His temple. More to be desired of me, O my Church, than gold, yea than fine gold, sweeter to me than honey and the honeycomb.

Now, kind Sir, the very desire of my heart is still to wait upon you. Please tell the Churchwardens all is reconciled, and if not, I will get me away into the wilderness, and hide me in the desert, in the cleft of the rock. But I hope still to be your Gehazi, and when I meet my Shunamite to say, "All, all is well." And I will conclude my blunders with my oft-repeated prayer, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

P.S.—Now, Sir, I shall go on with my fees the same as I found them, and will make no more trouble about them, but I will not, I cannot leave you, nor your delightful duties.—Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE G——G

A Minister's Uprising

Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, describes a day's
work o o o o o o

CHESTERTON, *May 26, 1784*

OLD FRIEND,—You love I should write folios : that depends upon circumstances, and if the thunderstorm lasts, it will be so : but what a sad thing it is to be forced to write, when one has nothing to say? Well, you shall have an apology for not writing,—that is, a diary of one day.

Rose at three o'clock—crawled into the library—and met one who said, “Yet a little while is the light with you : walk while ye have the light—the night cometh, when no man can work—my father worketh hitherto, and I work.”

Rang the great bell, and roused the girls to milking—went up to the farm, roused the horse-keeper—fed the horses while he was getting up—called the boy to suckle the calves, and clean out the cow-house—lighted the pipe, walked round the gardens to see what was wanting there—went up the paddock to see if the weanling calves were well—went down to the ferry, to see whether the boy had scooped and cleaned the boats—returned to the farm—examined the shoulders, heels, traces, chaff, and corn of eight horses going to plough—mended the acre staff—cut some thongs, whip-corded the boys' plough whips—pumped the troughs full—saw the hogs fed—examined the swill tubs, and then the cellar—ordered a quarter of malt, for the hogs want grains, and the men want beer—filled the pipe again, returned to the river, and bought a lighter of turf for dairy fires, and another of sedge for ovens—hunted up the wheelbarrows and set them a-trundling—returned to the farm, called the men to breakfast, and cut the boys' bread and cheese,

From Five till Noon

and saw the wooden bottles filled—sent one plough to the three-roods, another to the three half-acres, and so on—shut the gates, and the clock struck five—breakfasted—set two men to ditch the five roods—two more to chop sads, and spread about the land—two more to throw up muck in the yard—and three men and six women to weed wheat—set on the carpenter to repair cow-cribs, and set them up till winter—the wheeler to mend up the old carts, cart-ladders, rakes, etc., preparatory to hay-time and harvest—walked to the six-acres, found hogs in the grass—went back and sent a man to hedge and thorn—sold the butcher a fat calf, and the suckler a lean one—the clock strikes nine—walked into barley-field—barleys fine, picked off a few tiles and stones, and cut a few thistles—the peas fine, but foul ; the charlock must be topped—the tares doubtful ; the fly seems to have taken them—prayed for rain, but could not see a cloud—came round to the wheat-field—wheats rather thin, but the finest colour in the world—set four women on to the shortest wheats—ordered one man to weed the ridge of the long wheats—and two women to keep rank and file with him in the furrows—thistles many—blue-bottles no end—traversed all the wheat-field—came to the fallow-field—the ditchers have run crooked—set them straight—the flag-sads cut too much, rush-sads too little, strength wasted, shew the men how to three-corner them—laid out more work for the ditchers—went to the ploughs—set the foot a little higher ; cut a wedge, set the coulter deeper, must go and get a new mould-board against to-morrow—went to the other plough—picked up some wool, and tyed over the traces—mended a horse-tree, tyed a thong to the plough-hammer—went to see which lands want ploughing first—sat down under a bush—wondered how any man could

Afternoon and Evening

be so silly as to call me *reverend*—read two verses and thought of his loving-kindness in the midst of his temple—gave out, “Come all harmonious tongues,” and set Mount Ephraim tune—rose up—whistled—the dogs wagged their tails, and on we went—got home—dinner ready—filled the pipe—drank some milk—and fell asleep—woke by the carpenter for some slats, which the sawyer must cut—the Reverend Messrs. A. in a coat, B. in a gown of black, and C. in one of purple, came to drink tea, and to settle whether Gomer was the father of the Celts and Gauls and Britons, or only the uncle—proof sheet from Mr. Archdeacon—corrected it—washed—dressed—went to meeting, and preached from, *The end of all things is at hand, be ye sober and watch unto prayer*—found a dear brother *reverence* there, who went home with me, and edified us all out of Solomon’s Song, with a dish of tripe out of Leviticus, and a golden candlestick out of Exodus.—Really and truly we look for you and Mrs. Keene and Mr. Dore at harvest ; and if you do not come I know what you all are.

Let Mr. Winch go where he can better himself. Is not this a folio ? And like many other folios ?

R. ROBINSON

Charles Lamb saves George Dyer’s life



(To John Rickman)

[? November 1801]

A LETTER from G. Dyer will probably accompany this. I wish I could convey to you any notion of the whimsical scenes I have been witness to in this fortnight past. ’Twas on Tuesday week the poor heathen

The Old Burnt Preface

scrambled up to my door about breakfast time. He came thro' a violent rain with no neckcloth on, and a *beard* that made him a spectacle to men and angels, and tap'd at the door. Mary open'd it, and he stood stark still and held a paper in his hand importing that he had been ill with a fever. He either wouldn't or couldn't speak except by signs. When you went to comfort him he put his hand upon his heart and shook his head and told us his complaint lay where no medicines could reach it. I was dispatch'd for Dr. Dale, Mr. Phillips of St. Paul's Churchyard, and Mr. Frend, who is to be his executor. George solemnly delivered into Mr. Frend's hands and mine an old burnt preface that had been in the fire, with injunctions which we solemnly vow'd to obey that it should be printed after his death with his last corrections, and that some account should be given to the world why he had not fulfill'd his engagement with subscribers. Having done this and borrow'd two guineas of his bookseller (to whom he imparted in confidence that he should leave a great many loose papers behind him which would only want methodising and arranging to prove very lucrative to any bookseller after his death), he laid himself down on my bed in a mood of complacent resignation. By the aid of meat and drink put into him (for I all along suspected a vacuum) he was enabled to sit up in the evening, but he had not got the better of his intolerable fear of dying ; he expressed such philosophic indifference in his speech and such frightened apprehensions in his physiognomy that if he had truly been dying, and I had known it, I could not have kept my countenance. In particular, when the doctor came and ordered him to take little white powders (I suppose of chalk or alum, to humour him), he ey'd him with a *suspicion* which I could not account for ; he has since explain'd that he

Dirty Niece and Dirtier Nephew

took it for granted Dr. Dale knew his situation and had ordered him these powders to hasten his departure that he might suffer as little pain as possible. Think what an aspect the heathen put on with these fears upon a dirty face. To recount all his freaks for two or three days while he thought he was going, and how the fit operated, and sometimes the man got uppermost and sometimes the author, and he had this excellent person to serve, and he must correct some proof sheets for Phillips, and he could not bear to leave his subscribers unsatisfy'd, but he must not think of these things now, he was going to a place where he should satisfy all his debts—and when he got a little better he began to discourse what a happy thing it would be if there was a place where all the good men and women in the world might meet, meaning heav'n, and I really believe for a time he had doubts about his soul, for he was very near, if not quite, light-headed. The fact was he had not had a good meal for some days and his little dirty Niece (whom he sent for with a still dirtier Nephew, and hugg'd him, and bid them farewell) told us that unless he dines out he subsists on tea and gruels. And he corroborated this tale by ever and anon complaining of sensations of gnawing which he felt about his *heart*, which he mistook his stomach to be, and sure enough these gnawings were dissipated after a meal or two, and he surely thinks that he has been rescued from the jaws of death by Dr. Dale's white powders. He is got quite well again by nursing, and chirps of odes and lyric poetry the day long—he is to go out of town on Monday, and with him goes the dirty train of his papers and books which follow'd him to our house. I shall not be sorry when he takes his nipt carcase out of my bed, which it has occupied, and vanishes with all his Lyric lumber, but I will endeavour

George Burnett's Case

to bring him in future into a method of dining at least once a day. I have proposed to him to dine with me (and he has nearly come into it) whenever he does not go out ; and pay me. I will take his money beforehand and he shall eat it out. If I don't it will go all over the world. Some worthless relations, of which the dirty little devil that looks after him and a still more dirty nephew are component particles, I have reason to think divide all his gains with some lazy worthless authors that are his constant satellites. The Literary Fund has voted him seasonably £20, and if I can help it he shall spend it on his own carcase. I have assisted him in arranging the remainder of what he calls Poems and he will get rid of 'em I hope in another [*Here three lines are torn away at the foot of the page, wherein Lamb makes the transition from George Dyer to another poor author George Burnett*].

I promised Burnett to write when his parcel went. He wants me to certify that he is more awake than you think him. I believe he may be by this time, but he is so full of self-opinion that I fear whether he and Phillips will ever do together. What he is to do for Phillips he whimsically seems to consider more as a favour done *to* P. than a job *from* P. He still persists to call employment *dependence*, and prates about the insolence of book-sellers and the tax upon geniuses. Poor devil ! he is not launched upon the ocean and is sea-sick with aforethought. I write plainly about him, and he would stare and frown finely if he read this treacherous epistle, but I really am anxious about him, and that [*? it*] nettles me to see him so proud and so helpless. If he is not serv'd he will never serve himself. I read his long letter to Southey, which I suppose you have seen. He had better have been furnishing copy for Phillips than luxuriating

“Not think it Backbiting”

in tracing the causes of his imbecility. I believe he is a little wrong in not ascribing more to the structure of his own mind. He had his yawns from nature, his pride from education.

I hope to see Southey soon, so I need only send my remembrance to him now. Doubtless I need not tell him that Burnett is not to be foster'd in self-opinion. His eyes want opening, to see himself a man of middling stature. I am not oculist enough to do this. The book-sellers may one day remove the film. I am all this time on the most cordial supping terms of amity with G. Burnett and really love him at times : but I must speak freely of people behind their backs and not think it backbiting. It is better than Godwin's way of telling a man he is a fool to his face.

I think if you could do anything for George in the way of an office (God knows whether you can in any haste, but you did talk of it) it is my firm belief that it would be his *only chance* of settlement ; he will never live by his *literary exertions*, as he calls them—he is too proud to go the usual way to work, and he has no talents to make that way unnecessary. I know he talks big in his letter to Southey that his mind is undergoing an alteration and that the die is now casting that shall consign him to honour or dishonour, but these expressions are the convulsions of a fever, not the sober workings of health. Translated into plain English, he now and then perceives he must work or starve, and then he thinks he'll work ; but when he goes about it there's a lion in the way. He came dawdling to me for an Encyclopædia yesterday. I recommended him to Norris' library ; and he said if he could not get it there Phillips was bound to furnish him with one ; it was Phillips' interest to do so, and all that. This was

A Life of G. Dyer

true with some restrictions—but as to Phillips' interests to oblige G. B. ! Lord help his simple head ! P. could by a *whistle* call together a host of such authors as G. B. like Robin Hood's merry men in green. P. has regular regiments in pay. Poor writers are his crab-lice and suck at him for nutriment. His round pudding chops are their *idea* of plenty when *in their idle fancies they aspire to be rich*.

What do you think of a life of G. Dyer ? I can scarcely conceive a more amusing novel. He has been connected with all sects in the world and he will faithfully tell all he knows. Everybody will read it ; and if it is not done according to my fancy I promise to put him in a novel when he dies. Nothing shall escape *me*. If you think it feasible, whenever you write you may encourage him. Since he has been so close with me I have perceiv'd the workings of his inordinate vanity, his gigantic attention to particles and to prevent open vowels in his odes, his solicitude that the public may not lose any tittle of his poems by his death, and all the while his utter ignorance that the world don't care a pin about his odes and his criticisms, a fact which everybody knows but himself—he *is a rum genius*.

C. L.

William Cowper is solicited for his vote



(To the Rev. John Newton)

March 29, 1784

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It being His Majesty's pleasure that I should yet have another opportunity to write before he dissolves the Parliament, I avail myself of it with all possible alacrity. I thank you for your last, which was not the less welcome for coming.

The Nature of the Candidate

like an extraordinary gazette, at a time when it was not expected.

As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water-mark, by the usual dashing of the waves.

We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville.

Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach. Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour were filled. Mr. Grenville advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit.

I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit.

I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt,

“A most Kissing Gentleman”

because Mr. Ashburner, the draper, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew.

He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman.







He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a ribband from his buttonhole.

The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly that I had not that influence for which he sued; and which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody. The town, however, seems to be much at his service, and if he be equally successful throughout the county, he will undoubtedly gain his election.

Mr. Ashburner, perhaps, was a little mortified, because it

John Poole in Bed

was evident that I owed the honour of this visit to his misrepresentation of my importance. But had he thought proper to assure Mr. Grenville that I had three heads, I should not, I suppose, have been bound to produce them.

Charles Dickens gives Wilkie Collins news of John
Poole      

October 8, 1862

I SAW Poole (for my sins) last Saturday, and he *was* a sight. He had got out of bed to receive me (at 3 p.m.) and tried to look as if he had been up at Dawn—with a dirty and obviously warm impression of himself on the bedclothes. It was a tent bedstead with four wholly unaccounted for and bare poles, each with an immense spike on the top, like four Lightning conductors. He had a fortnight's grey beard, and had made a lot of the most extraordinary memoranda of questions to ask me—which he couldn't read—through an eyeglass which he couldn't hold. He was continually beset with a notion that his landlady was listening outside the door, and was continually getting up from a kind of ironing-board at which he sat, with the intention of darting at the door, but invariably missed his aim, and brought himself up by the forehead against blind corners of the wall. He had a dressing-gown over his nightshirt, and wore his trousers where Blondin wears his Baskets. He said, with the greatest indignation, I might suppose what sort of "society" he could get out of his landlady, when he mentioned that she could say nothing, on being consulted by him touching the Poison-Case at the Old Bailey, but, "People didn't ought to poison people, sir; it's wrong."—Ever affectly,

C. D.

Another Model

Another model letter from Mary Guilhermin's book,

1766



DEAR MAMMA,—I am much obliged to papa and you for thinking on me ; the taylor took measure of me yesterday, and promises me my new suit by next Sunday. I shall examine every pocket in hopes of finding a blessing from dear mamma ; whose tenderness and spirit, I am persuaded, will not permit her to let her son appear less than others, as my school-fellows are indulged for good behaviour to go next week with our mistress and see a play exhibited by some strollers in the next village ; we have had an account of its being very merry and entertaining. Everyone is intent on the promised diversion, and I hope you will not disappoint the proposed pleasure of your affectionate and dutiful son.

XIII

THE PEN REFLECTIVE

Horace Walpole in the vein of Ecclesiastes



(To George Montagu, Esq.)

PARIS, *November 21, 1765*

YOU must not be surprised when my letters arrive long after their date. I write them at my leisure, and send them when I find any Englishman going to London, that I may not be kept in check, if they were to pass through both French and English posts.

Your letter to Madame Roland, and the books for her, will set out very securely in a day or two. My bookseller here happens to be of Rheims, and knows Madame Roland, *comme deux gouttes d'eau*. This perhaps is not a well-placed simile, but the French always use one, and when they are once established, and we know the tense, it does not signify sixpence for the sense.

My gout and my stick have entirely left me. I totter still, it is true, but I trust I shall be able to whisk about at Strawberry as well almost as ever. When that hour strikes ; to be sure I shall not be very long. The same-

Old Age and Friends

ness of the life here is worse than anything but English politics and the House of Commons. Indeed, I have Dumenil. The Dauphin, who is not dead yet, detains the whole camp at Fontainebleau, whither I dare not venture, as the situation is very damp, and the lodgings abominable. Sights, too, I have scarce seen any yet ; and I must satisfy my curiosity ; for I think I shall never come again—no, let us sit down quietly and comfortably, and enjoy our coming old age. Oh ! if you are in earnest and transplant yourself to Roehampton, how happy I shall be ! You know, if you believe an experience of above thirty years, that you are one of the very, very few, for whom I really care a straw. You know how long I have been vexed at seeing so little of you. What has one to do, when one grows tired of the world, as we both do, but to draw nearer and nearer, and gently waste the remains of life with the friends with whom one began it ! Young and happy people will have no regard for us and our old stories, and they are in the right ; but we shall not tire one another ; we shall laugh together when nobody is by to laugh at us, and we may think ourselves young enough when we see nobody younger. Roehampton is a delightful spot, at once cheerful and retired. You will amble in your chaise about Richmond-park ; we shall see one another as often as we like ; I shall frequently peep at London, and bring you tales of it, and we shall sometimes touch a card with the Clive, and laugh our fill ; for I must tell you, I desire to die when I have nobody left to laugh with me. I have never yet seen or heard anything serious that was not ridiculous. Jesuits, methodists, philosophers, politicians, the hypocrite Rousseau, the scoffer Voltaire, the encyclopedists, the Humes, the Lytteltons, the Grenvilles, the

Rabelais' Easy-Chair

atheist tyrant of Prussia, and the Mountebank of History, Mr. Pitt, all are to me but impostors in their various ways. Fame or interest is their object; and after all their parade, I think a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes the stars but so many farthing candles; created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, a wiser and more rational being, and, I am sure, an honester than any of them. Oh! I am sick of visions and systems, that shove one another aside, and come over again, like the figures in a moving picture. Rabelais brightens up to me as I see more of the world; he treated it as it deserved, laughed at it all, and, as I judge from myself, ceased to hate it; for I find hatred an unjust preference. Adieu!

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu contemplates facts 

(To E. W. Montagu, Esq.)

December 9, 1711

I AM not at all surprised at my Aunt Cheyne's conduct: people are seldom very much grieved (and never ought to be) at misfortunes they expect. When I gave myself to you, I gave up the very desire of pleasing the rest of the world, and am pretty indifferent about it. I think you are very much in the right for designing to visit Lord Pierrepont. As much as you say I love the town, if you think it necessary for your interest to stay some time here, I would not advise you to neglect a certainty for an uncertainty; but I believe if you pass the Christmas here, great matters will be expected from your hospitality: however, you are a better judge of that than I am.

Lady Mary's Maxim

I continue indifferently well, and endeavour as much as I can to preserve myself from spleen and melancholy ; not for my own sake ; I think that of little importance ; but in the condition I am, I believe it may be of very ill consequence ; yet, passing whole days alone as I do, I do not always find it possible, and my constitution will sometimes get the better of my reason. Human nature itself, without any additional misfortunes, furnishes disagreeable meditations enough. Life itself, to make it supportable, should not be considered too nearly ; my reason represents to me in vain the inutility of serious reflections.

The idle mind will sometimes fall into contemplations that serve for nothing but to ruin the health, destroy good humour, hasten old age and wrinkles, and bring on an habitual melancholy.

'Tis a maxim with me to be young as long as one can : there is nothing can pay one for that invaluable ignorance which is the companion of youth ; those sanguine groundless hopes, and that lively vanity, which make all the happiness of life. To my extreme mortification I grow wiser every day. I don't believe Solomon was more convinced of the vanity of temporal affairs than I am : I lose all taste of this world, and I suffer myself to be bewitched by the charms of the spleen, though I know and foresee all the irremediable mischiefs arising from it.

I am insensibly fallen into the writing you a melancholy letter, after all my resolutions to the contrary ; but I do not enjoin you to read it. Make no scruple of flinging it into the fire at the first dull line.

Forgive the ill effects of my solitude, and think me,
as I am, ever yours,

M. W. MONTAGU

An Illusion of Youth

William Cowper moralises on Time ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Mrs. Cowper)

August 31, 1780

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I am obliged to you for your long letter, which did not seem so ; and for your short one, which was more than I had any reason to expect.

Short as it was, it conveyed to me two interesting articles of intelligence : An account of your recovering from a fever, and of Lady Cowper's death. The latter was, I suppose, to be expected, for by what remembrance I have of her ladyship, who was never much acquainted with her, she had reached those years that are always found upon the borders of another world. As for you, your time of life is comparatively of a youthful date. You may think of death as much as you please (you cannot think of it too much), but I hope you will live to think of it many years.

It costs me not much difficulty to suppose that my friends who were already grown old when I saw them last, are old still ; but it costs me a good deal sometimes to think of those who were at that time young, as being older than they were. Not having been an eye-witness of the change that time has made in them, and my former idea of them not being corrected by observation, it remains the same ; my memory presents me with this image unimpaired, and while it retains the resemblance of what they were, forgets that by this time the picture may have lost much of its likeness, through the alteration that succeeding years have made in the original. I know not what impressions Time may have made upon your person, for while his claws, (as our grannams called

Time, the Friend and Foe

them,) strike deep furrows in some faces, he seems to sheath them with much tenderness, as if fearful of doing injury to others.

But though an enemy to the person, he is a friend to the mind, and you have found him so.

Though even in this respect his treatment of us depends upon what he meets with at our hands; if we use him well, and listen to his admonitions, he is a friend indeed, but otherwise the worst of enemies, who takes from us daily something that we valued, and gives us nothing better in its stead. It is well with them who, like you, can stand a-tiptoe on the mountain top of human life, look down with pleasure upon the valley they have passed, and sometimes stretch their wings in joyful hope of a happy flight into eternity. Yet a little while, and your hope will be accomplished.

When you can favour me with a little account of your own family, without inconvenience, I shall be glad to receive it; for though separated from my kindred by little more than half a century of miles, I know as little of their concerns as if oceans and continents were interposed between us.—Yours, my dear cousin,

W. C.

James Beattie compares himself with others ∞ ∞

(To the Hon. Charles Boyd)

ABERDEEN, *November 16, 1766*

L UCKILY I am now a little better, so as to be able to read a page, and write a sentence or two without stopping; which, I assure you, is a very great matter. My hopes and my spirits begin to revive once more.

Points of Similarity

I flatter myself I shall soon get rid of this infirmity; nay, that I shall ere long be in the way of becoming a *great man*.

For have I not headaches, like Pope? vertigo, like Swift? grey hairs, like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes (for fear of corns) like Virgil? and sometimes complain of sore eyes (though not of *lippitude*), like Horace? Am I not at this present writing invested with a garment not less ragged than that of Socrates? Like Joseph the patriarch, I am a mighty dreamer of dreams; like Nimrod the hunter, I am an eminent builder of castles (in the air).

I procrastinate, like Julius Cæsar, and very lately, in imitation of Don Quixote, I rode a horse, lean, old, and lazy, like Rosinante.

Sometimes, like Cicero, I write bad verses; and sometimes bad prose, like Virgil. This last instance I have on the authority of Seneca.

I am of small stature, like Alexander the Great; I am, somewhat inclinable to fatness, like Dr. Arbuthnot and Aristotle; and I drink brandy and water, like Mr. Boyd.

I might compare myself, in relation to many other infirmities, to many other *great men*; but if Fortune is not influenced in my favour by the particulars already enumerated, I shall despair of ever recommending myself to her good graces. I once had some thought of soliciting her patronage on the score of my resembling great men in their good qualities; but I had so little to say on that subject, that I could not for my life furnish matter for one well-rounded period: and you know a short, ill-turned speech is very improper to be used in an address to a female deity.

Do not you think there is a sort of antipathy between philosophical and poetical genius? I question whether

Poets and Philosophers

one person was ever eminent for both. Lucretius lays aside the poet when he assumes the philosopher, and the philosopher when he assumes the poet. In the one character he is truly excellent, in the other he is absolutely nonsensical.

Hobbes was a tolerable metaphysician, but his poetry is the worst that ever was. Pope's *Essay on Man* is the finest philosophical poem in the world ; but it seems to me to do more honour to the imagination than to the understanding of its author : I mean, its sentiments are noble and affecting, its images and allusions apposite, beautiful, and new ; its wit transcendently excellent ; but the scientific part of it is very exceptionable.






Whatever Pope borrows from Leibnitz, like most other metaphysical theories, is frivolous and unsatisfying. What Pope gives us of his own, is energetic, irresistible, and divine. The incompatibility of philosophical and poetical genius is, I think, no unaccountable thing.

Poetry exhibits the general qualities of a species ; philosophy the particular qualities of individuals.

This forms its conclusions from a painful and minute examination of single instances : *that* decides instantaneously, either from its own instinctive sagacity, or from a singular and unaccountable penetration, which at one glance sees all the instances which the philosopher must leisurely and progressively scrutinize, one by one. This persuades you gradually, and by detail ; the other overpowers you in an instant by a single effort. Observe the effect of argumentation in poetry ; we have too many instances of it in Milton : it transforms the noblest thoughts into drawling inferences, and the most beautiful language into prose ; it checks the tide of passion, by giving the mind a different employment in the comparison of ideas.

The Grave's Alleviations

A little philosophical acquaintance with the most beautiful parts of nature, both in the material and immaterial system, is of use to a poet, and gives grace and solidity to poetry ; as may be seen in *The Georgics*, *The Seasons*, and *The Pleasures of Imagination* ; but this acquaintance, if it is anything more than superficial, will do a poet rather harm than good ; and will give his mind that turn for minute observation which enfeebles the fancy by restraining it, and counteracts the native energy of judgment by rendering it fearful and suspicious.

The Rev. Sydney Smith contemplates another and a better life     

COMBE FLOREY, *September 13, 1842*

MY DEAR LADY HOLLAND,—I am sorry to hear Allen is not well ; but the reduction of his legs is a pure and unmixed good ; they are enormous,—they are clerical ! He has the creed of a philosopher and the legs of a clergyman ; I never saw such legs,—at least, belonging to a layman.

Read *A Life in the Forest*, skipping nimbly ; but there is much of good in it.

It is a bore, I admit, to be past seventy, for you are left for execution, and are daily expecting the death-warrant ; but, as you say, it is not anything very capital we quit. We are, at the close of life, only hurried away from stomach-aches, pains in the joints, from sleepless nights and unamusing days, from weakness, ugliness, and nervous tremors ; but we shall all meet again in another planet, cured of all our defects. — will be less irritable ; — more silent ; — will assent ; Jeffrey will speak slower ; Bobus will be just as he is ; I shall be more

Seneca's Bailiff

respectful to the upper clergy ; but I shall have as lively a sense as I now have of all your kindness and affection for me.

SYDNEY SMITH

Seneca enlarges to Lucilius on old age



WHITHERSOEVER I turn myself, spectacles, reminding me of my old age, present themselves. I went the other day to my country house just without the city, and was complaining how much it seemed out of repair, notwithstanding the money which I had laid out upon it. "It may be so," said my bailiff, "but it is from no want of care in me. I have done all in my power to keep it up, but the truth is, it is very old." Now you must know this villa was of my own raising, and has grown to its present state under my hands. What then have I to expect, if stones laid down in my own time have begun to show symptoms of decay. Being put by this a little out of humour with the man, I laid hold of the first occasion of finding fault. "It seems to me," said I, "that these plane trees have been neglected—how rotten and withered are these branches ! In what a wretched and foul condition are these stems ! This would not have happened if anyone had dug round it, and given it water." Upon this my bailiff swears heartily that he had done all he could, and spared no pains, but that they were old. Now, between ourselves, I planted these trees, and witnessed their first foliage. Turning to the gate, I said, "And pray who is that decrepit old fellow whom you have, properly enough, placed here, with his face turned towards the door ? Where in the world did you pick up this man ? What whim is this, to bring this strange corpse into my house ?" "What ! don't you know me ?" says the old man ; "I am Felicio, to whom you used formerly

Pleasures of Decay

to bring playthings. I am the son of Philositus, your former bailiff : your little favourite playfellow." "Surely," said I, "the man is out of his mind. He my little playfellow ! The thing is impossible. But yet it may be, for I see he is shedding his teeth."

Thus am I indebted to my villa for reminding me, at every turn, of my old age. Let us embrace it, let us love it. To him who knows how to use it, it is full of enjoyment.

Fruit is most grateful towards the end of the season. Youth, when one is just losing it, is the most attractive. The last potation is the most agreeable to the lovers of wine ; and every pleasure is most valued when it is coming to its end. Decay, when it is gradual, and not precipitate, is really pleasant. I don't fear to pronounce a man standing on the very ultimate verge of life to have his solace ; or at least we may say that the absence of all want is itself a sort of pleasure. How sweet it is to have lived out, and taken leave of, all anxious desires !

But you will say that it is painful to have death before our eyes. My answer is, in the first place, that it ought always to be before the eyes as well of the young as of the old, for we are not summoned as we stand in the register ; and then that no one is so old as to make it sinful to expect another day. Every day is another step in life. All our time consists of parts : of circles within circles of different orbits, some one of which comprehends the rest ; and thus compasses the whole life of man from the beginning to the end of life. One includes the years of youth ; another circumscribes only the period of childhood. A single year includes all those portions of time, of which the whole of existence is but the multiplication. A month lies within a narrower circle, and a day within one still of smaller extent. And yet the day has its

The Wise Pacuvius

beginning and its end, from the rising to the setting sun. Heraclitus, who from his obscurity got the name of Scotinus, says "dies par omni est": which some interpret, as if he had said, They are equal as to hours, which is true enough; for if a day is a period of six hours, in that respect all days are equal: since the night takes up what the day loses.

Another holds the meaning to be, that one day is but the counterpart of the other. After all, the longest space of time exhibits only what may be found in one day—light and darkness, with their vicissitudes and alternations. Every day should be therefore so ordered and disposed, as if it closed the series, and were the measure and completion of our existence. Pacuvius, who made Syria his own country by long residence in it, when he had regaled himself with wine and feasting, as at a funeral banquet, caused himself to be carried from supper to his bed-chamber, that, amidst the applause of his companions, the following words might be chanted to music, *βεβιωται βεβιωται*, "He hath lived, he hath lived"; and such was his practice every day. Now this that was done by him with a bad conscience, let us do with a good one; and when retiring to our rest, let us with composed and cheerful spirits have to say, "Vixi, et quem cursum dederat fortuna peregi." If God should vouchsafe us a to-morrow, let us receive it with joy and thankfulness.

He is the happiest man,—the secure possessor of himself, who waits for the morrow without solicitude;—he who can go to bed at night saying, "I have lived," in the full sense of the phrase, rises every morning with a day gained.

Exiled to Enfield

Charles Lamb laments his exile



(To William Wordsworth)

p.m. January 22, 1830

AND is it a year since we parted from you at the steps of Edmonton Stage? There are not now the years that there used to be. The tale of the dwindled age of men, reported of successional mankind, is true of the same man only. We do not live a year in a year now. 'Tis a *punctum stans*. The seasons pass us with indifference. Spring cheers not, nor winter heightens our gloom, Autumn hath foregone its moralities, they are hey-pass re-pass [as] in a show-box. Yet as far as last year occurs back, for they scarce show a reflex now, they make no memory as heretofore—'twas sufficiently gloomy. Let the sullen nothing pass.

Suffice it that after sad spirits prolonged thro' many of its months, as it called them, we have cast our skins, have taken a farewell of the pompous troublesome trifle called housekeeping, and are settled down into poor boarders and lodgers at next door with an old couple, the Baucis and Baucida of dull Enfield. Here we have nothing to do with our victuals but to eat them, with the garden but to see it grow, with the tax gatherer but to hear him knock, with the maid but to hear her scolded. Scot and lot, butcher, baker, are things unknown to us save as spectators of the pageant. We are fed we know not how, quietists, confiding ravens. We have the *otium pro dignitate*, a respectable insignificance. Yet in the self-condemned obliviousness, in the stagnation, some molesting yearnings of life, not quite kill'd, rise, prompting me that there was a London, and that I was of that old Jerusalem. In dreams I am in

The Forlorn Londoner

Fleetmarket, but I wake and cry to sleep again. I die hard, a stubborn Eloisa in this detestable Paraclete. What have I gained by health?—intolerable dulness. What by early hours and moderate meals?—a total blank. O never let the lying poets be believed, who 'tice men from the cheerful haunts of streets—or think they mean it not of a country village. In the ruins of Palmyra I could gird myself up to solitude, or muse to the snorings of the Seven Sleepers, but to have a little teasing image of a town about one, country folks that do not look like country folks, shops two yards square, half a dozen apples and two penn'orth of overlooked gingerbread for the lofty fruiterers of Oxford Street—and, for the immortal book and print stalls, a circulating library that stands still, where the shew-picture is a last year's Valentine, and whither the fame of the last ten Scotch novels has not yet travel'd (marry, they just begin to be conscious of the Red Gauntlet), to have a new plastered flat church, and to be wishing that it was but a Cathedral. The very blackguards here are degenerate. The topping gentry, stock brokers. The passengers too many to ensure your quiet, or let you go about whistling, or gaping—too few to be the fine indifferent pageants of Fleet Street. Confining, room-keeping thickest winter is yet more bearable here than the gaudy months. Among one's books at one's fire by candle one is soothed into an oblivion that one is not in the country, but with the light the green fields return, till I gaze, and in a calenture can plunge myself into Saint Giles's. O let no native Londoner imagine that health, and rest, and innocent occupation, interchange of converse, sweet and recreative study, can make the country any thing better than altogether odious and detestable. A garden was the primitive prison till man

The Newspaper Dove

with promethean felicity and boldness luckily sinn'd himself out of it. Thence follow'd Babylon, Nineveh, Venice, London, haberdashers, goldsmiths, taverns, play-houses, satires, epigrams, puns—these all came in on the town part, and the thither side of innocence. Man found out inventions.

From my den I return you condolence for your decaying sight, not for any thing there is to see in the country, but for the miss of the pleasure of reading a London newspaper. The poets are as well to listen to, any thing high may, nay must, be read out—you read it to yourself with an imaginary auditor—but the light paragraphs must be glid over by the proper eye, mouthing mumbles their gossamery substance. 'Tis these trifles I should mourn in fading sight. A newspaper is the single gleam of comfort I receive here, it comes from rich Cathay with tidings of mankind. Yet I could not attend to it read out by the most beloved voice. But your eyes do not get worse, I gather. O for the collyrium of Tobias enclosed in a whiting's liver to send you with no apocryphal good wishes! The last long time I heard from you, you had knock'd your head against something. Do not do so. For your head (I do not flatter) is not a nob, or the top of a brass nail, or the end of a nine-pin—unless a Vulcanian hammer could fairly batter a "Recluse" out of it, then would I bid the smirch'd god knock and knock lustily, the two-handed skinker. What a nice long letter Dorothy has written! Mary must squeeze out a line *propria manu*, but indeed her fingers have been incorrigibly nervous to letter-writing for a long interval. 'Twill please you all to hear that, tho' I fret like a lion in a net, her present health and spirits are better than they have been for some time past: she is absolutely three years and a half younger, as I tell her, since we

Daddy Westwood

have adopted this boarding plan. Our providers are an honest pair, dame Westwood and her husband—he, when the light of prosperity shined on them, a moderately thriving haberdasher within Bow Bells, retired since with something under a competence, writes himself parcel gentleman, hath borne parish offices, sings fine old sea songs at threescore and ten, sighs only now and then when he thinks that he has a son on his hands about 15, whom he finds a difficulty in getting out into the world, and then checks a sigh with muttering, as I once heard him prettily, not meaning to be heard, “I have married my daughter, however,”—takes the weather as it comes, outsides it to town in severest season, and a’ winter nights tells old stories not tending to literature, how comfortable to author-rid folks ! and has *one anecdote*, upon which and about forty pounds a year he seems to have retired in green old age. It was how he was a *rider* in his youth, travelling for shops, and once (not to baulk his employer’s bargain) on a sweltering day in August, rode foaming into Dunstable upon a *mad horse* to the dismay and expostulatory wonderment of innkeepers, ostlers, etc., who declared they would not have bestrid the beast to win the Darby. Understand the creature gall’d to death and desperation by gad flies, cormorants winged, worse than beset Inachus’ daughter. This he tells, this he brindles and burnishes on a’ winter’s eves, ’tis his star of set glory, his rejuvenescence to descant upon. Far from me be it (*dii avertant*) to look a gift story in the mouth, or cruelly to surmise (as those who doubt the plunge of Curtius) that the inseparate conjuncture of man and beast, the centaur-phenomenon that stagger’d all Dunstable might have been the effect of unromantic necessity, that the horse-part carried the reasoning, willy nilly, that needs must when such a devil drove, that

A Portrait

certain spiral configurations in the frame of Thomas Westwood unfriendly to alighting, made the alliance more forcible than voluntary. Let him enjoy his fame for me, nor let me hint a whisper that shall dismount Bellerophon. Put case he was an involuntary martyr, yet if in the fiery conflict he buckled the soul of a constant haberdasher to him, and adopted his flames, let Accident and He share the glory! You would all like Thomas Westwood.



How weak is painting to describe a man! Say that he stands four feet and a nail high by his own yard measure, which like the Sceptre of Agamemnon shall never sprout again, still you have no adequate idea, nor when I tell you that his dear hump, which I have favour'd in the picture, seems to me of the buffalo—indicative and repository of mild qualities, a budget of kindnesses, still you have not the man. Knew you old Norris of the Temple, 60 years ours and our father's friend, he was not more natural to us than this old W. the acquaintance of scarce more weeks. Under his roof now ought I to take my rest, but that back-looking ambition tells me I might yet be a Londoner. Well, if we ever do move, we have encumbrances the less to impede us: all our furniture has faded under the auctioneer's hammer, going for nothing like the tarnish'd frippery of the prodigal, and we have only a spoon or two left to bless us. Clothed we came into Enfield, and naked we must go out of it. I would live in London shirtless, bookless. Henry

Emma Isola

Crabb is at Rome, advices to that effect have reach'd Bury. But by solemn legacy he bequeath'd at parting (whether he should live or die) a Turkey of Suffolk to be sent every succeeding Xmas to us and divers other friends. What a genuine old Bachelor's action! I fear he will find the air of Italy too classic. His station is in the Hartz forest, his soul is *Begoethe'd*. Miss Kelly we never see; Talfourd not this half-year; the latter flourishes, but the exact number of his children, God forgive me, I have utterly forgotten, we single people are often out in our count there. Shall I say two? One darling I know they have lost within a twelvemonth, but scarce known to me by sight, and that was a second child lost. We see scarce anybody. We have just now Emma with us for her holydays: you remember her playing at brag with Mr. Quillinan at poor Monkhouse's! She is grown an agreeable young woman; she sees what I write, so you may understand me with limitations. She was our inmate for a twelvemonth, grew natural to us, and then they told us it was best for her to go out as a Governess, and so she went out, and we were only two of us, and our pleasant house-mate is changed to an occasional visitor. If they want my sister to go out (as they call it) there will be only one of us. Heaven keep us all from this acceding to Unity!

Can I cram loves enough to you all in this little O?
Excuse particularizing. C. L.

XIV

THE MEN OF ACTION


Abraham Cann, the Devonshire wrestler, challenges
Polkinghorne, the Cornishman ♪ ♪ ♪

POLKINGHORNE, I will take off my stockings and play bare-legged with you, and you may have two of the hardest and heaviest shoes you like that can be made of leather in the county of Cornwall, and you shall be allowed to stuff yourself as high as the arm pits, to any extent not exceeding the size of a Cornish peck of wool ; and I will further engage not to kick you, if you do not kick me.

C. A., an old and not unsophisticated bowler, gives his captain a word of counsel on the eve of the All England match ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

DEAR JOHN,—So I am to bowl for your people against them Englanders. You wants to win, don't you now? Then don't be so stupid as to roll your ground.—Yours,
C. A.

“The ball is ‘over’”

Bob Thoms the umpire sends in his resignation 

(To Sir William Russell of the Incognito C.C.)

March 15, 1901, N.W.

SIR,—The hardest letter, that ever I handled the pen, to write, I now commence, and that is, through failing health—coupled with “Anno Domini”—I have to close my Cricket career—after 39 years of devoted services to the Incognito club.

I had hoped to have been with you one more season—in the new Century—but not having wintered well has upset that hope.

I cannot find words sufficiently expressive to thank the old Club—and its members—for the many kindnesses received, and for the confidence that has been reposed in me.

It is a source of intense gratification to me to think—and know that I have been associated with the “Incognito Club” ever since it was *first* started in 1861—when the late Mr. Pincott Hemming was its Secretary—and to call to mind, that since that time, the club, by the ceaseless energy and watchfulness of his Brother—Sir Augustus W. L. Hemming—was brought forward and placed, in the prominent position, of being one of the most popular of the wandering clubs in England. I cannot enter further into the past, for the subject is too depressing for me to dwell on, so therefore, I must at once return—again—my sincere and heartfelt thanks, and my last words shall be, the fervent hope, that “Health, Happiness and Prosperity” may attend all “Incogs”—and thus I conclude—with my *well known exclamation*, The ball is “over,” gentlemen,—and respectfully subscribe—Your faithful servant,

ROBERT THOMS

“Half Hours with the Worst Authors”

Edward FitzGerald recommends two letters ♪ ♪

(To Charles Keene)

Friday [1880]

MY DEAR KEENE,— . . . Beckford's *Hunting* is an old friend of mine : excellently written ; such a relief (like Wesley and the religious men) to the Essayist style of the time.

Do not fail to read the capital Squire's Letter in recommendation of a Stable-man, dated from Great Addington, Northants, 1734 : of which some little is omitted after Edition I. ; which edition has also a Letter from Beckford's Huntsman about a wicked “Dauffer,” wholly omitted. This first Edition is a pretty small 4to 1781, with a Frontispiece by Cipriani ! . . .

If you come down this Spring, but not before May, I will show you some of these things in a Book I have, which I might call “Half Hours with the Worst Authors,” and very fine things by them.

It would be the very best Book of the sort ever published, if published ; but no one would think so but myself, and perhaps you, and half a dozen more. If my Eyes hold out I will copy a delightful bit by way of return for your Ballad.

I

An old Squire (a friend of Peter Beckford) supplies a gentleman with an impartial character of John Gray ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

SIR,—Yours I receiv'd the 24th of this present instant, June, and, at your request, will give you an impartial account of my man, John Gray's character. He

A Character

is a shoemaker, or cordwainer, which you please to call it, by trade, and now in our town ; he is following the carding business for every one that wants him ; he served his time at a town called Binstock, in Northamptonshire ; and from thence the Great Addington journeyman, to this occupation, as before mentioned, and used to come to my house, and found, by riding my horses to water, that he rode a horse pretty well ; which was not at all mistaken, for he rides a horse well : and he looks after a kennel of hounds very well, and finds a hare very well : he hath no judgment in hunting a pack of hounds now, though he rides well, he don't with discretion, for he don't know how to make the most of a horse ; but a very harey-starey fellow : will ride over a church if in his way, though he may prevent a leap by having a gap within ten yards of him ; and if you are not in the field with himself, when you are hunting to tutor him about riding, he will kill all the horses you have in the stable in one month, for he hath killed downright, and lamed so that they will never be fit for use, no more than five horses since he has hunted my hounds, which is two years and upwards ; he can talk no dog language to a hound ; he hath no voice ; speaks to a hound such as if his head were in a churn ; nor neither does he know how to draw a hound when they are at a loss, no more than a child of two years old. As to his honesty, I always found him honest till about a week ago. I sent my servant that I have now to fetch some sheep's feet from Mr. Stanjan, of Higham Ferrers, where Gray used to go for feet, and I always send my money by the man that brings the feet ; and Stanjan told my man that I have now that I owed him money for feet ; and when the man came home he told me, and I went to Stanjan, and then I found the truth of the matter. Gray had kept the money in his hands,

Light o' Love


and had never paid Stanjan : he had along with me once for a letter, in order for his character, to give him one, but I told him I could not give him a good one, so I would not write at all. Gray is a very great drunkard, can't keep a penny in his pocket : a sad notorious lyar. If you send him upon a mile or two from Uppingham, he will get drunk, stay all day, and never come home until the middle of the night, or such time as he knows his master is in bed. He can nor will not keep any secret ; neither has he so much wit as other people, for the fellow is half a fool, for if you would have business done with expedition, if he once gets out of the town, or sight of you, shall see him no more, while the next morning he serves me so and so : you must expect the same if you hire him. I use you just as I would be used myself ; if I desired a character of you of a servant, that I had design'd to hire of yours, as to let you know the truth of every thing about him.

I am, sir, your most humble servant to command.

P.S.—He takes good care of his horses, with good looking after as to the dressing of them ; but if you don't take care, he will fill the manger full of corn, so that he will clog the horses, and ruin the whole stable of horses.

GREAT ADDINGTON, *June 28, 1734*

II

A huntsman informs his master of the misfortune of his daughter and the state of the hounds 




HONORED SIR,—I beg your honouers pardon a thousand times my wicked dafter is brout to bed this day God be praisd the child Is dead har mother

Tom Moody

nor I new nothing of it nor nobody as I can hear off 'tis that vile fellow R—— P—— at —— as he has acted such a Roges part she shall not have him by no means I am all most at my wits end I don't now what to do. I bag your honouer will Consider me and Let har stay in har place I don't hear but that all har fellow sarvants likes har very well I have been out with the hounds this day to ayer the frost is very bad the hounds are all pure well at present and horses shepard has had a misfortin with his mare she hung harsel with the holter and throd har self and broak har neck and frac tard skul so we wus forsd to nock har In the head from your ever dutiful Humbel Sarvant.

* * * * *

Wednesday evening

George Forester (of Shropshire) gives Mr. Chambers an account of the death and funeral of Tom Moody, his great whipper-in   

DEAR CHAMBERS,—On Tuesday last was buried poor Tom Moody, as good for rough and smooth as ever entered Wildman's Wood. He died brave and honest, as he lived—beloved by all, hated by none that ever knew him. I took his own orders as to his will, funeral, and every other thing that could be thought of.

He died sensible and fully collected as ever man died—in short, died game to the last; for when he could hardly swallow, the poor old lad took the farewell glass for success to fox-hunting and his poor old master (as he termed it), for ever. I am his sole executor, and the bulk of his fortune he left to me—six and twenty shillings, real and bonâ fide sterling cash, free from all incum-

“Old Soul”

brances, after every debt discharged to a farthing. Noble deeds for Tom, you'd say. The poor old ladies at the Ring of Bells are to have a knot each in remembrance of the poor old lad.

Salop paper will show the whole ceremony of his burial, but for fear you should not see that paper—I send it to you as under.

“Sportsmen, attend.—On Tuesday, 29th inst., was buried at Barrow, near Wenlock, Salop, Thomas Moody, a well-known whipper-in to G. Forester, Esq.'s fox-hounds for twenty years. He was carried to the grave by a proper number of earth-stoppers, and attended by many other sporting friends, who heartily mourned for him.”

Directly after the corpse, followed his old favourite horse (which he always called his “Old Soul”), thus accoutred: carrying his last fox's brush in front of his bridle, with his cap, whip, boots, spurs, and girdle across the saddle. The ceremony being over, he (by his own desire), had three clear, rattling view-halloos o'er his grave; and thus ended the career of poor Tom, who lived and died an honest fellow, but alas! a very wet one.

I hope you and your family are well, and you'll believe me as much yours,

G. FORESTER

Sergeant Dunt craves permission to fish a little in
Col. Cartwright's stream ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

WEEDON BARRACKS, *May 12, 1856*

HONOURABLE SIR,—A discharged sergeant of the Rifle Brigade, and one who had the honour of serving in the same company, and in more than one campaign under the command of the gallant and much

A Favoured Stream

lamented Captain Cartwright (killed in the Crimea), now makes bold to solicit of his honoured and bereaved parent a written permission to angle of an evening in that wealthy brook, which pursuing its way by Divine Will through your honour's extensive domains, encourages and compensates the fertilizing efforts of your Honour's tenants, adds a cheerful vivacity to the face of nature, seasonably serene, and furnishes of its finny population many impressive convictions of the kind, unceasing regard of our Great Creator in the various sustenance, delicate and invigorating, for the more worthy portion of His laborious creatures.

Trusting, Sir, that indulgent time is reconciling you to the fate of my kind, deceased officer, your much-beloved and lamented son, and that your Honour will condescend to befriend the man whom that son so often befriended, I remain, Honourable Sir, with all due respect, your Honour's most humble and devoted servant and faithful soldier,

JOHN DUNT

WAR DEPARTMENT, WEEDON BARRACKS

Captain Nelson tells Collingwood of his hopes and fears with regard to the French ♪ ♪ ♪

"CAPTAIN"—LEGHORN ROADS, *August 1, 1796*

MY DEAR COLL.,—The Viceroy tells me that you are at Fiorenzo; therefore I take my chance of this finding you. My date makes me think I am almost at Leghorn; soon I hope to be there in reality. Except 1700 poor devils, all are gone to join the army. Sometimes I hope, at others despair of getting these starved Leghornese to cut the throats of the French crew.

An Idea for a Christian

What an idea for a Christian ! I hope there is a great latitude for us in the next world.

This blockade is complete, and we lie very snug in the North Road, as smooth as in a harbour.

I have this moment received information that the post from Naples, which arrived to-day, has brought accounts that the truce with Naples finishes, and hostilities commence to-morrow. Pray God it may be so ! With a most sincere wish for driving the French to the devil, your good health, an honourable peace, us safe at home again, I conclude by assuring you, my dear Collingwood, of my unalterable friendship and regard, and that I am, in the fullest sense of the words, yours most truly,

HORATIO NELSON

XV

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Sir William Napier tells Lady Hester Stanhope the
story of his life ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

FRESHFORD, *March* 1839

DEAR, DEAR LADY HESTER,—I wish from the bottom of my worn out heart that I could once more see and talk to you, the friend of my youth, when I was full of hope and cared little for the frowns and pains of the world. I too could tell of many things that would be strange, strange as belonging to that England which you and I once thought we knew, a proud and generous nation. It is not so now. Gold is an Englishman's god—gold and ostentation of gold; for this they live and die. Generous sentiments are scarce, magnanimous actions scarcer. Napoleon was cast to perish on a rock under brutal insult; you, the niece of Mr. Pitt, are subject to the persecutions of Lord Palmerston. Yet we are on the eve of great and terrible changes—I fear not for the better, because gold is still the moving power. But there are powerful passions excited. The working men of England, driven by long oppression to violence, are arming

Sir Charles Napier

universally ; and as they have bad leaders blood will flow without utility.

You demand a history of me and mine. It is painful to relate ; to me painful. My old mother died long ago, she was eighty-four. Two of my sisters live, one unmarried ; the other has been for years married to Sir Henry Bunbury. His first wife was my wife's sister, his second my own sister ; he has four sons by his first marriage, none by his second.

My eldest brother Charles has been twice married ; he has two very young children, girls. It was he you heard from in the Ionian Isles, where he has by his talent, activity, and good government, and the great public works he carried on, left a good name that will not be suffered to die away by the Greeks. His numerous wounds, seven and very severe, have not impaired his activity or whitened his head. This month he takes the command of the northern district of England ; it is a fearful command at this time, but he is modelled after your men of the *far East*. His book would entertain you much ; it is full of painful interest also, for he writes well and acts well ; nevertheless, I believe that it is not his book that you have heard of, but my book ; of that hereafter.

My second brother George has lost his arm ; like a brave man he lost it on the top of the breach at Ciudad Rodrigo in 1812. He married a Scotch lady, and has three sons and two daughters, the youngest about 18 ; his wife died after the birth of the last child, and he, with a steadiness of sorrow and principle not common, devoted himself to the education of his children. He and Charles are generals and Knights of the Bath, and George is Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. Two of his sons are with him. His policy is to protect the Caffres from the gold-seeking rapacity of the English and Dutch settlers.

“Black Charles”

He has a hard task, but his soul is honest and his heart true and firm as steel, and he has withal a good head.

Richard did not pursue the law. He married a widow, a very clever and beautiful person; his pursuits and his wife's are alike; they have both great talent, great learning, have high and warm imaginations, delighting in poetry and noble writing, and he is by nature a poet himself; yet their particular pursuit, strange to say, is political economy, and I think it is not unlikely he may some day publish a book on that subject.

Henry, the youngest of us, is a post captain of the navy. He married his cousin. He was rich, happy, and his wife good, affectionate, and one of the most lovely of God's creatures. Alas! she died suddenly about two years ago, leaving him with four children, a broken-hearted, miserable man. He devotes himself to his children; their mother was thirty when she died. He has written a History of Florence, but it is not yet published.

What now shall I tell you? My own tale? I like it not, yet I will tell it to you and truly; but first permit me to join to my brother's history that of our cousin Charles, “Black Charles,” they call him. He is not a brother, but I claim a place for him because he is a great man, though a strange one. A life of daring and enterprise in our navy as a captain created him a name which attracted the Portuguese Emperor Don Pedro's attention. Black Charles was offered the command of his fleet; he accepted it, and in one action, against the most overpowering advantages on the enemy's side, decided the fate of Portugal. He is now going out in command of the *Powerful*, 74, to the Levant, and you may perhaps hear of him again; a rough black diamond, but a sure hand in war. Thus you see that we have not let our name sink in the world, and yet we have been honest, and what has been a sore

Charles Fox's Daughter

stumbling block in our way, independent ; always opposed to the powers that be, and yet able to force our way to notice though not to riches. I would willingly dwell longer upon his exploits, but they must have reached you even on Mount Lebanon.

Now again for myself. Why did you ask me? I must rip up old sorrows and probe wounds that have never healed. I am a broken man ; broken, though not bent,—the world has failed to do that ; and I can still make my enemies beware of treading on me. But I will tell you all truly ; I have played my part and continue to do so in the world.

It has been in my power to raise a civil war, and it may be so again, but I abhor such a proceeding. Yet I am courted and feared without reason ; for sorrow and pain, continual sorrow and continual pain, have almost if not quite unsettled my reason ; at least I am conscious that I had another mind once. I do not think I was married when you left England ; my wife was the daughter of Charles Fox. She lives to take care of me when I want care, and she is a person capable of great things ; fortitude and judgment, and energy mental and bodily, she possesses in an extraordinary degree. When I married I was sanguine and confident that I could go far in the world. Secretly I thought God had given me the head and heart of a warrior, and my body was then of iron. Well ! I won my spurs honourably. Three decorations and two steps of rank I gained in the field of battle. Wellington gave them to me ; and I am a Companion of the Bath,—no great thing ; but I could have safely rested my claim upon the testimony of my soldiers. Ah ! those soldiers, the few that are now living are poor and miserable, for England despises her former defenders. My regiment,

A Crichton

the 43rd, was one of the three regiments that formed the Light Division, always in contact with the enemy ; those three regiments were avowedly the best that England ever had under arms ; this is no idle boast ; war was better known, the art more advanced, under Napoleon than in any age of the world before, and the French veterans, those victors of a thousand battles, never could stand an instant before my gallant men. Curse on the liars, the cowardly calumniators, who have told you that Irishmen are cowards ! they are equal to the English in bravery, superior to them in hardihood of sufferance and in devotion to their officers in the hour of trouble ; and they are superior to the Scotch in everything, and yet there are very good soldiers among the Scotch ; I like them not, but I will not belie them.

Was not mine a fair stand for distinction ? Peace came, and I am a colonel still ! I had no money ; and younger officers, some of them bad, were ready to purchase over my head ; others were thrust without money over me. I had gained the brevet rank, but I could not gain the regimental rank ; the first was to be got on the field, and I got it ; the second was to be got by money or favour, and I had neither, so I went on half-pay, and tried to still the gnawing of the worm by occupation of a different kind. I painted in oils, and was elected a member of the Royal Academy. I modelled in clay, and Chantrey, the first of modern sculptors, proposed and got me elected as sculptor in the Savants' Club, called the Athenæum. But the worm gnawed still. I wrote reviews, and I was successful : my first was to defend Sir John Moore. To you I need not speak of that great and heroic man, nor of his wrongs. Southey wrote a history of the Peninsular War ; it was smooth and clear in style, but nerveless as the author's

Justice to France

mind, except where his political rancour broke out to destroy Sir John Moore's reputation and to calumniate the French army. For the latter I cared only as it was disgraceful to my country to malign a brave though vanquished enemy ; but for the first I felt as you would have felt. I was going to write a commentary, but I soon saw that to beat the false history I must write a true one ; the task was formidable, but I have done it ; I have beaten the calumniator and established my History in the world's good opinion. I have done more ; without yielding one jot of England's glory, I have by just and fair admission of the prowess of France obtained the public assent of the French Generals to the truth of my relation ; I have thus solved the difficult problem of recording the defeats of a vain, proud, fiery, and learned people, without losing their approbation ; I have obtained the testimony to the glory of the British arms, and thus placed the latter upon a rock. Many enemies in England I have created by this ; I should have doubted the value of my work if it had not been so. Truth must be offensive to many. But I have also many supporters, because truth is powerful ; and though my History wants one volume still to complete it, the first five volumes have been already translated into French, into Spanish in South America, and reprinted in North America ; it is also translated, or being translated, into Italian and German ; and I have been elected a member of Military Sciences in Sweden.

My English enemies are virulent and numerous, but I have met them all, and hitherto triumphed, and I will meet them as long as I can speak, write, or pull a trigger. I like not republicanism : I desire to see men of all classes as God designed them to be, free in thought and unabashed in mien, but virtuous and obedient to the just

The Duke of Wellington

institutions of society. I do not spurn at kings and nobles, but I like not that they should spurn at me. Would that we had a great man ! Changes are at hand ; the masses are in movement, but there is none to guide them, and they will clash for mischief.

I am well pleased to do some good, but what can a man do who dare not encounter a shower of rain lest he should lose the use of his limbs for six months ? Where is Wellington at this crisis ? you will say. Alas ! he is great by the head, not by the heart, and that is only half the greatness required. He is of commanding intellect, commanding courage, commanding honesty ; but he despises the people, has too many prejudices opposed to their feelings, and they hate and fear him. He cannot work with them because he will not work for them. The rest are nothing. I have, as I have told you, great influence with the people, but it will not last ; I can do evil, but not much good ; I know well what to oppose, but not what to assist, for there is much evil striving on all sides, and my worn-out body will not allow me to engage in anything requiring exertion of limb. Do not mistake me or imagine that I mistake myself. I do not suppose myself a great man, but I have certain talents and knowledge which have given me a power in the present conjuncture that might be turned to good or bad if I had bodily strength, and I have it not. Well ! enough of this matter.

I strive to put off the tale of my sorrows as long as possible. I have had ten children ; seven still live, six girls and a boy, but he is deaf and dumb. Three girls died—the first young, very young ; it was written ; I wept for her, and so it ended. The next died at five years old. She was also deaf and dumb, and that caused her death. I will not tell you how ; I cannot ; but twelve

“The good Pitt blood”

years ago she died, and I have not been as I should be since. Should I tell you how more than human her beauty was, and how exquisite her intelligence, notwithstanding her deafness, you would not believe me, but though I am at times insane I am not doting. Six years after her death my eldest child was torn from me by consumption ; she was fair and joyous as the day, tall and beautiful, strong of heart, and clear of head ; yet a few short months sufficed to send her at the age of eighteen from the admiration of the world, to her grave. I would tell you more about my dear children, only I cannot. I have seven still. . . .

Lord Chatham, *the* Lord Chatham's Correspondence is being published by his grand-nephews, Captain Pringle of the Guards and his brother. Two volumes are out, but as yet there is not much interest attached to them, so I suppose the valuable papers are reserved for the other volumes ; when I say interest, I mean proportionably to the man's fame, for there is curious reading in them. Pringle I have had some dealings with, and I think, judging from his correspondence (for I have not seen him) there is a vein of the good Pitt blood running through him. Your men of the East are, I believe, superior individually to the men of the West, but each man stalks through the world like a lion ; they do not herd together, nor work together, and like lions they live and die and are forgotten. The horse is a better animal than the lion. You love the brute creation, and so do I, and I love you that you do love them. The brute is of the same essence as man,—an essence, however, more restricted, confined by the inferior organisation of their bodies, therefore more condensed and honest. What are we of human species? Angels or devils, or a compound of

“The glorious Privilege”

both? There must be, I think, two governing principles, God and demon, and we partake of both. This doctrine is Eastern, and I think it more reasonable than any other.

I wonder whether you will like my History? It is no whining affair. There is much in it that you would not like, but nothing I think that would lessen your friendship for me; you might be angry, but you would not cease to be my friend, and surely there is nothing that you could say or do, however passionate at the moment, that would hinder me from being your friend, esteeming and reverencing you as much as I do now and ever have done. The time I passed with you at Mr. Pitt's home at Putney, and the few short hasty periods in which [I had] the happiness of being received by you after his death (for me at least they were few, too few, and too short), are among the moments of my past life remembered most vividly and fondly.

This letter runs on. How shall I send it to you? I think I shall be able to transmit it officially, for I have still some friends at court who can separate the politician from the man.

Do not start at my consideration for your pocket; you live in the East, but I live in England where money is the great god; I hate their god,—but I worship sometimes lest my impiety should be observed and punished. Yes, I think of money. Is not poverty despised, wronged, insulted? and shall I not tremble lest my good, my innocent, my beautiful girls, and my helpless boy, should be consigned to such horrors? My life is not worth a year's purchase; who shall protect them after my death if they be poor? For their sakes I live; for their sakes I gather money by my labours; and for them I keep it as well as my nature will allow me. Ah! you are a living

A Woman's champion

example of the generosity of Englishmen towards helpless women.

Your nephew, Lord Mahon, is an author, and in his book sneered at mine, went out of his way to say that it was the best French history of the war ; this he thought smart, but I replied I had always thought the doing justice to [a] vanquished enemy was thoroughly English until my Lord Mahon assured me it was wholly French. Was I right? I tell you this that you may know me ; I am not changed in feeling or sentiment, but you should know what I have said or done that might offend you, or I should be going to you under false colours.

Much do I like your Beni Omayya, if they be truly heroic ; but beauty and courage are only gifts, not virtues. Are they compassionate? Are they just? Are they mild or cruel to their vanquished foes? Are they gentle or harsh to women and children? Do they admit women to have rights? Do they govern them by their affections or by their fears? Do they make chattels of their persons, and kill them in their tyrannical jealousy? If they do they are not heroes for me. Women are gentle, and should be free human beings, and the peculiar guardians of children, the most helpless and the most beautiful of God's creation ; there can be no virtue, no generosity, where they are oppressed. I know nothing so degrading to England, as the treatment of women and children. There is a factory system grown up in England since you left it, the most horrible that the imagination can conceive. Factories they are called, but they are in reality *hells*, where hundreds of children are killed yearly in protracted torture, and that cotton lords may extract gold from their bones, and marrow, and blood. Patience! patience! There will be a day of reckoning for all things ; it approaches.

The true Tory

Farewell, dear Lady Hester. God knows whether I shall ever hear from you or write to you again, but never believe that I have not a true and deep feeling for you.

W. NAPIER

April 10th.—I have delayed sending this letter for a fortnight, partly to obtain a surer mode of conveyance ; in which I have succeeded through my friend Lord Fitzroy-Somerset, a true Tory of your school, that is to say, an upright honest man, and a thorough gentleman, both in his private and public proceedings. Principally, however, I have waited to procure some information for you about the estates and persons you mentioned in your letter.

XVI

FRIENDSHIP AND MORE

Marjorie Fleming sends her mother her love



MY DEAR LITTLE MAMA,—I was truly happy to hear that you were all well. We are surrounded with measles at present on every side, for the Herons got it, and Isabella Heron was near Death's Door, and one night her father lifted her out of bed, and she fell down as they thought lifeless. Mr. Heron said, "That lassie's deed noo"—"I'm no deed yet." She then threw up a big worm nine inches and a half long. I have begun dancing, but am not very fond of it, for the boys strikes and mocks me.—I have been another night at the dancing ; I like it better. I will write to you as often as I can ; but I am afraid not every week. I long for you with the longings of a child to embrace you—to fold you in my arms. I respect you with all the respect due to a mother. You don't know how I love you. So I shall remain, your loving child,

M. FLEMING

Swift and Pope's dear Patty

The Dean in Dublin ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Mrs. Martha Blount in town)

DUBLIN, *February 29, 1727-28*

DEAR PATTY,—I am told you have a mind to receive a letter from me, which is a very undecent declaration in a young lady, and almost a confession that you have a mind to write to me ; for as to the fancy of looking on me as a man sans consequence, it is what I will never understand. I am told likewise you grow every day younger, and more a fool, which is directly contrary to me, who grow wiser and older, and at this rate we shall never agree. I long to see you a London lady, where you are forced to wear whole clothes, and visit in a chair, for which you must starve next summer at Petersham, with a mantua out at the sides ; and sponge once a week at our house, without ever inviting us in a whole season to a cow-heel at home. I wish you would bring Mr. Pope over with you when you come ; but we will leave Mr. Gay to his beggars and his operas till he is able to pay his club. How will you pass this summer for want of a Squire to Ham-Common and Walpole's Lodge ? for as to Richmond Lodge and Marble Hill, they are abandoned as much as Sir Spencer Compton : and Mr. Schabe's coach, that used to give you so many a set-down, is wheeled off to St. James'. You must be forced to get a horse, and gallop with Mrs. Jansen and Miss Bedier, your greatest happiness is, that you are out of the chiding of Mrs. Howard and the Dean ; but I suppose Mr. Pope is so just as to pay our arrears, and that you edify as much by him as by us, unless you are so happy that he now looks upon you as reprobate and a cast-away, of which I think he hath given me some

“The six lines in a hook”

hints. However, I would advise you to pass this summer at Kensington, where you will be near the court, and out of his jurisdiction; where you will be teased with no lectures of gravity and morality, and where you will have no other trouble than to get into the mercers' books, and take up a hundred pounds of your principal for Quadrille. Monstrous, indeed, that a fine lady, in the prime of life and gaiety, must take up with an antiquated Dean, an old gentlewoman of four-score, and a sickly poet. I will stand by my dear Patty against the world, if Teresa beats you for your good, and I will buy her a fine whip for the purpose. Tell me, have you been confined to your lodging this winter for want of chair-hire?

Do you know that this unlucky Mr. Delany came last night to the Deanery, and being denied, without my knowledge, is gone to England this morning, and so I must send this by the post. I bought your opera to-day for sixpence, so small printed that it will spoil my eyes. I ordered you to send me your edition, but now you may keep it till you get an opportunity.

Patty, I will tell you a blunder. I am writing to Mr. Gay, and had almost finished the letter, but by mistake I took up this instead of it, and so the six lines in a hook are all to him, and therefore you must read them to him for I will not be at the trouble to write them over again. My greatest concern in the matter is, that I am afraid I continue in love with you, which is bad after near six months' absence. I hope you have done with your rash and other little disorders, and that I shall see you a fine, young, healthy, plump lady, and, if Mr. Pope chides you, threaten him that you will turn heretic. Adieu! dear Patty, and believe me to be one of your truest friends and humblest servants; and that, since I can never live

Temptings to Dublin

in England, my greatest happiness would be to have you and Mr. Pope condemned, during my life, to live in Ireland, he at the deanery, and you, for reputation sake, just at next door, and I will give you eight dinners a week, and a whole half dozen of pint bottles of good French wine at your lodgings, a thing you could never expect to arrive at, and every year a suit of fourteen-penny stuff, that should not be worn out at the right side ; and a chair costs but sixpence a job ; and you shall have Catholicity as much as you please, and the Catholic Dean of St. Patrick's, as old again as I, for your Confessor. Adieu again, dear Patty,

JON. SWIFT

Edward FitzGerald replies at once ♪ ♪ ♪

GELDESTONE HALL, *September 9, 1834*

DEAR ALLEN,—I have really nothing to say, and I am ashamed to be sending this third letter all the way from here to Pembrokeshire for no earthly purpose : but I have just received yours : and you will know how very welcome all your letters are to me when you see how the perusal of this one has excited me to such an instant reply. It has indeed been a long time coming : but it is all the more delicious. Perhaps you can't imagine how wistfully I have looked for it : how, after a walk, my eyes have turned to the table, on coming into the room, to see it. Sometimes I have been tempted to be angry with you : but then I thought I was sure you would come a hundred miles to serve me, though you were too lazy to sit down to a letter. I suppose that people who are engaged in serious ways of life, and are of well filled minds, don't think much

The noble *Spectator*

about the interchange of letters with any anxiety : but I am an idle fellow, of a very ladylike turn of sentiment : and my friendships are more like loves, I think. Your letter found me reading the "Merry Wives of Windsor" too : I had been laughing aloud to myself : think what another coat of happiness came over my former good mood. You are a dear good fellow, and I love you with all my heart and soul.

The truth is I was anxious about this letter, as I really did not know whether you were married or not—or ill—I fancied you might be anything, or anywhere. . . .

As to reading I have not done much. I am going through the *Spectator* : which people think nowadays a poor book : but I honour it much.

What a noble kind of Journal it was ! There is certainly a good deal of what may be called "*pill*," but there is a great deal of wisdom, I believe, only it is couched so simply that people can't believe it to be real absolute wisdom.

The little book you speak of I will order and buy. I heard from Thackeray, who is just upon the point of going to France ; indeed, he may be there by this time. I shall miss him much. . . .

Farewell, my dearest fellow.

You have made me very happy to hear from you : and to know that all is so well with you.

Believe me to be your ever affectionate friend,

E. FITZGERALD

Annihilation and Peace

Lord Nelson anticipates to Collingwood the battle
of Trafalgar ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

October 9, 1805

I SEND you Captain Blackwood's letter : and as I hope Weazle has joined, he will have five frigates and a brig. They surely cannot escape us. I wish we could get a fine day. I send you my plan of attack, as far as a man dare venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in ; but, my dear friend, it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll, have no little jealousies : we have only one great object in view,—that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you : and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend

NELSON AND BRONTË

Dr. Johnson makes Miss Susannah Thrale happy ♪

About July 5, 1783







DEAREST MISS SUSY,—When you favoured me with your letter, you seemed to be in want of materials to fill it, having met with no great adventures either of peril or delight, nor done nor suffered any thing out of the common course of life.

When you have lived longer, and considered more, you will find the common course of life very fertile of observation and reflection. Upon the common course of life must our thoughts and our conversation be generally employed. Our general course of life must denomi-

Ingredients of a Letter

nate us wise or foolish, happy or miserable ; if it is well regulated, we pass on prosperously and smoothly ; as it is neglected, we live in embarrassment, perplexity, and uneasiness.

Your time, my love, passes, I suppose in devotion, reading, work, and company. Of your devotions, in which I earnestly advise you to be very punctual, you may not perhaps think it proper to give me an account ; and of work unless I understood it better, it will be of no great use to say much ; but books and company will always supply you with materials for your letters to me, as I shall always be pleased to know what you are reading, and with what you are pleased ; and shall take great delight in knowing what impression new modes or new characters make upon you, and to observe with what attention you distinguish the tempers, dispositions, and abilities of your companions. A letter may be always made out of the books of the morning or talk of the evening : and any letters from you, my dearest, will be welcome to your, etc.

Lord Collingwood writes to Lady Collingwood of his weariness of the sea and the education of their children      

OCEAN, *June 16, 1806*

THIS day, my love, is the anniversary of our marriage, and I wish you many happy returns of it. If ever we have peace, I hope to spend my latter days amid my family, which is the only sort of happiness I can enjoy—after this life of labour, to retire to peace and quietness is all I look for in the world. Should we decide to change the place of our dwelling, our route would of

The Sailor Home from the Sea

course be to the southward of Morpeth ; but then I should be for ever regretting those beautiful views, which are nowhere to be exceeded ; and even the rattling of that old waggon that used to pass our door at 6 o'clock in a winter's morning had its charms. The fact is, whenever I think how I am to be happy again, my thoughts carry me back to Morpeth, where, out of the fuss and parade of the world, surrounded by those I loved most dearly, and who loved me, I enjoyed as much happiness as my nature is capable of. Many things that I see in the world give me a distaste for the finery of it. The great knaves are not like those poor unfortunates, who, driven perhaps to distress from accidents which they could not prevent, or at least not educated in principles of honour and honesty, are hanged for some little thievery ; while a knave of education and high breeding, who brandishes his honour in the eyes of the world, would rob a state to its ruin. For the first, I feel pity and compassion ; for the latter, abhorrence and contempt : they are the tenfold vicious.

Have you read—but what I am more interested about, is your sister with you, and is she well and happy ? Tell her—God bless her !—I wish I were with you, that we might have a good laugh. God bless me ! I have scarcely laughed these three years. I am here, with a very reduced force, having been obliged to make detachments to all quarters. This leaves me weak, while the Spaniards and French within are daily gaining strength. They have patched and pieced until they have now a very considerable fleet. Whether they will venture out I do not know ; if they come, I have no doubt we shall do an excellent deed, and then I will bring them to England myself.

How do the dear girls go on ? I would have them

Education for Girls

taught geometry, which is of all sciences in the world the most entertaining : it expands the mind more to the knowledge of all things in nature, and better teaching to distinguish between truths and such things as have the appearance of being truths, yet are not, than any other.

Their education, and the proper cultivation of the sense which God has given them, are the objects on which my happiness most depends. To inspire them with a love of everything that is honourable and virtuous, though in rags, and with contempt for vanity in embroidery, is the way to make them the darlings of my heart. They should not only read, but it requires a careful selection of books ; nor should they ever have access to two at the same time ; but when a subject is begun, it should be finished before anything else is undertaken. How would it enlarge their minds, if they should acquire a sufficient knowledge of mathematics and astronomy to give them an idea of the beauty and wonders of the creation ! I am persuaded that the generality of people, and particularly fine ladies, only adore God because they are told it is proper and the fashion to go to church ; but I would have my girls gain such knowledge of the works of the creation, that they may have a fixed idea of the nature of that Being who could be the Author of such a world. Whenever they have that, nothing on this side the moon will give them much uneasiness of mind. I do not mean that they should be Stoics, or want the common feelings for the sufferings that the flesh is heir to ; but they would then have a source of consolation for the worst that could happen.

Tell me how do the trees which I planted thrive ? Is there shade under the oaks for a comfortable summer seat ? Do the poplars grow at the walk, and does the

“A Lady dear”

wall of the terrace stand firm? My bankers tell me that all my money in their hands is exhausted by fees on the peerage, and that I am in their debt, which is a new epoch in my life, for it is the first time I was ever in debt since I was a midshipman. Here I get nothing; but then my expenses are nothing, and I do not want it, particularly now that I have got my knives, forks, teapot, and other things you were so kind as to send me.

Thackeray drops into verse to Mrs. Brookfield



'TIS one o'clock, the boy from *Punch* is sitting in the
passage here,

It used to be the hour of lunch at Portman Street, near
Portman Squeer.

O! stupid little printers' boy, I cannot write, my head is
queer,

And all my foolish brains employ in thinking of a lady
dear.

It was but yesterday, and on my honest word it seems
a year—

As yet that pleasure was not gone, as yet I saw that
lady dear—

She's left us now, my boy, and all this town, this life is
blank and drear.

Thou printers' devil in the hall, did'st ever see my lady
dear?

You'd understand, you little knave, I think, if you could
only see her,

Why now I look so glum and grave for losing of this
lady dear.

A lonely man I am in life, my business is to joke and
jeer,

A Swiss Cantab

A lonely man without a wife, God took from me a lady dear.




A friend I had, and at his side,—the story dates from seven long year—

One day I found a blushing bride, a tender lady kind and dear !

They took me in, they pitied me, they gave me kindly words and cheer,

A kinder welcome who shall see, than yours, O ! friend and lady dear ?

(The rest is wanting)

M. de Bonstetten describes Cambridge, and Mr. Gray describes M. de Bonstetten   

(To the Rev. Norton Nicholls)

CAMBRIDGE, *January 6, 1770*

HENCE, *vain deluding joys*, is our motto here, written on every feature, and hourly spoken by every solitary chapel bell ; so that decently you can't expect no other but a very grave letter. I really beg your pardon to wrap up my thoughts in so smart a dress, as in a quarto sheet. I know they should appear in a folio leaf, but the ideas themselves shall look so solemn as to belie their dress. Though I wear not yet the black gown, and am only an inferior priest in the temple of meditation, yet my countenance is already consecrated. I never walk but with even steps and musing gait, and looks conversing with the skies ; and unfold my wrinkles only when I see Mr. Gray, or think of you. Then, notwithstanding all your learnings and knowledge, I feel in such occasions that I have a heart, which you know

Strenuous Cambridge

is as some others, a quite profane thing to carry under a black gown.

I am in a hurry from morning till evening. At eight o'clock I am roused by a young square cap, with whom I follow Satan through chaos and night. He explained me in Greek and Latin, the *sweet reluctant amorous delays* of our grandmother Eve. We finish our travels in a copious breakfast of muffins and tea. Then appear Shakespeare and old Linneus struggling together as two ghosts would do for a damned soul. Sometimes the one gets the better, sometimes the other. Mr. Gray, whose acquaintance is my greatest debt to you, is so good as to show me Macbeth, and all witches, beldams, ghosts and spirits, whose language I never could have understood without his interpretation. I am now endeavouring to dress all those people in a French dress, which is a very hard labour.

I am afraid to take a room, which Mr. Gray shall keep much better. So I stop my ever rambling pen. My respectful compliments to Mrs. Nicholls. Only remember that you have nowhere a better or more grateful friend than your

DE BONSTETTEN

I loos'd Mr. Wheeler's letter and his direction.

I never saw such a boy; our breed is not made on this model. He is busy from morning to night, has no other amusement than that of changing one study for another; likes nobody that he sees here, and yet wishes to stay longer, though he has passed a whole fortnight with us already. His letter has had no correction whatever, and is prettier by half than English.

Would not you hazard your journal: I want to see what you have done this summer, though it would be safer and better to bring it yourself, methinks!

Corporal's Devotion

Complimens respectueux à Mad. Nichole, et à notre
aimable Cousine la *Sposa*. T. G.

Corporal William Follows, 43rd Regiment, sends
greeting to Colonel William Napier ∞ ∞

FERMOY, *August 26, 1820*

HONNORED SIR,—I most humbly hope your honnor will not deem it too presumtive of your servant Wm. Follows in addressing a few lines with my sincerest thanks for the many benefits and indulgences i receved from your honnor. It was greatly talked of your coming to join the Regiment again, but I am very sorry and so is a great many—indeed, most of the Regiment, that it is not so. I hear the men when they would see the mare, wishing that your honnor was back again, but she is gone too, so that there is nothing to remind them of you now but your honnor's deeds of justice and vaulor, witch will always be thought of by them that noes you. I hope, Sir, you will be pleased to give my duty to Mrs. Napier and i hope you will excuse my ignorant presumtive manner of writing, in witch i am very indolent, and is not able with my pen to express the warm sentiments of my mind towards your benevealent family whom everybody respecks. I have been corporal better than two years, and I was Lance-Sergeant but got reduced for a little misconduct, to Corporal again, but I am verry comfortable with my wife and child. Your honnor will undoubtedly think me very troublesum, but I hope you will impute it to the weakness of your ever most humble and duty full servant,

WM. FOLLOWS, Corpl.
43rd Regt. Lt. Infantry

A Letter of Sympathy

An Indian pupil sympathises with Sir George Grove
after an accident ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

[1886]

KIND LÁT SAHIB SALAMAT,—I was so very sad when our darling Miss Sahiba (Miss Campbell) told me that a cab had run over you, but we hope that you are quite well now, and we think that God must have sent flying down His shining angels to guard and take care of you from getting more hurt ! We often think of your kind words to us and of your smiles the first day we saw you, and we pray that God may let us see your kind face again. Now I must say Salám noble Lát Sahib. May God put a garland of love round your neck.—I remain your grateful little Indian friend,

HÁFIZÁN

Thomas Gray unlocks his heart to Richard West ♪

WHEN you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life ; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill, only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress and gets some ground ; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was ; I may, better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this ; in short, I believe I must not send you the history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the reformation. However, as the most undeserving people in the world must sure have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being

Old Friends

pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there ; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

CAMBRIDGE, *May 8, 1736*

Dean Swift is anxious for Mr. Pope's health ∪ ∪

February 7, 1735-6

IT is some time since I dined at the Bishop of Derry's, where Mr. Secretary Cary told me with great concern that you were taken very ill. I have heard nothing since ; only I have continued in great pain of mind ; yet for my own sake and the world's more than for yours ; because I well know how little you value life both as a philosopher and a Christian, particularly the latter, wherein hardly one in a million of us heretics can equal you.

If you are well recovered, you ought to be reproached for not putting me especially out of pain, who could not bear the loss of you ; although we must be for ever distant as much as if I were in the grave, for which my years and continual indisposition are preparing me every season. I have staid too long from pressing you to give me some ease by an account of your health. Pray do not use me so ill any more. I look upon you as an estate from which I receive my best annual rents, although I am never to see it. Mr. Tickell was at the same meeting under the same real concern ; and so were a hundred others of this town who had never seen you. I read to the Bishop of Derry the passage in your letter

The Dean deserted

which concerned him, and his Lordship expressed his thankfulness in a manner that became him. He is esteemed here as a person of learning, and conversation, and humanity, but he is beloved by all people. He is a most excessive whig but without any appearing rancour, and his idol is King William ; besides, £3,000 a year is an invincible sweetner !

I have nobody now left but you. Pray be so kind to outlive me ; and then die as soon as you please ; but without pain ; and let us meet in a better place, if my religion will permit, but rather my virtue, although much unequal to yours. Pray, let my Lord Bathurst know how much I love him. I still insist on his remembering me, although he is too much in the world to honour an absent friend with his letters. My state of health is not to boast of ; my giddiness is more or less too constant ; I sleep ill, and have a poor appetite. I can as easily write a poem in the Chinese language as my own. I am as fit for matrimony as invention ; and yet I have daily schemes for innumerable essays in prose, and proceed sometimes to no less than half a dozen lines, which the next morning become waste paper. What vexes me most is, that my female friends, who could bear me very well a dozen years ago, have now forsaken me ; although I am not so old in proportion to them as I formerly was : which I can prove by arithmetic, for then I was double their age, which now I am not.

Pray, put me out of fear as soon as you can, about that ugly report of your illness ; and let me know who this Cheseldon is, that hath so lately sprung up in your favour.

Give me also some account of your neighbour (Lord Bolingbroke), who wrote to me from Bath.

I hear he resolves to be strenuous for the taking of the test ; which grieves me extremely from all the un-

“Dear, lovely Mrs. Scurlock”

prejudiced reasons I was ever able to form, and against the maxims of all wise Christian governments, and which always had some established religion, leaving at best a toleration to others. Farewell, my dearest friend : ever and upon every account that can create friendship and esteem.

Dick Steele in chains ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

I

SMITH STREET, WESTMINSTER, 1707

MADAM,—I lay down last night with your image in my thoughts, and have awak'd this morning in the same contemplation. The pleasing transport with which I'me delighted, has a sweetness in it attended with a train of ten thousand soft desires, anxieties, and cares ; the day arises on my hopes with new brightness ; youth, beauty and innocence are the charming objects that steal me from myself, and give me joys above the reach of ambition, pride or glory. Beleive me, fair one, to throw myself at your feet is giving my self the highest blisse I know on Earth. Oh hasten ye minutes ! bring on the happy morning wherein to be ever her's will make me look down on thrones ! Dear Molly, I am tenderly, passionately, faithfully thine,

RICHARD STEELE

II

Saturday Night [Aug. 30, 1707]

DEAR, LOVELY MRS. SCURLOCK,—I have been in very good company, where your health, under the character of the woman I lov'd best, has been often drunk, so that I may say I am dead drunk for your sake, which is more than I die for you.—Yours,

R. STEELE

“Dear little Woman”

III

ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE

Sept. 1, 1707

MADAM,—It is the hardest thing in the world to be in love and yet to attend to businesse. As for me, all who speake to me find me out, and I must lock myself up, or other people will do it for me. A gentleman ask'd me this morning what news from Lisbon, and I answer'd she's exquisitely handsome. Another desir'd to know when I had been last at Hampton Court, I reply'd 'twill be on Tuesday come se'nnight. Prithee allow me at least to kisse your hand before that day, that my mind may be in some composure. O love!

A thousand torments dwell about thee,
Yet who would live to live without thee?

Methinks I could write a volume to you, but all the language on earth would fail in saying how much, and with what disinterested passion, I am ever yours,

RICHD. STEELE

[*Steele and his Prue were married on September 9, 1707.*]

IV

March 11, 1708-9

DEAR PRUE,—I enclose five guineas, but can't come home to dinner. Dear little woman, take care of thyself, and eat and drink cheerfully.

RICHD. STEELE

V

Dec. 23

MY DEAR,—I shall not come home to dinner, but have fixed everything; and received money for present uses. I desire, my dear, that you have nothing

“The prettyest Woman”

else to do but to be a darling ; the way to which is to be always in good humour, and beleive I spend none of my time but to the advantage of you.—Your most obedient husband,

RICHARD STEELE

VI

Sept. 30, 1710

DEAR PRUE,—I am very sleepy and tired, but could not think of closing my eyes till I had told you I am, dearest creature, your most affectionate and faithful husband,

RICHARD STEELE

From the Press one in the morning.

VII

July 15, 1712

DEAR PRUE,—I thank you for your kind billet. The nurse shall have money this week. I saw your son Dick, but he is a peevish chit. You cannot conceive how pleased I am that I shall have the prettyest house to receive the prettyest woman who is the darling of

RICHARD STEELE

VIII

HAMPTON COURT

Thursday, Noon, Sep. 17, 1712

DEAREST WIFE,—The finest woman in nature should not detain me an hour from you, but you must sometimes suffer the rivalship of the wisest men. Lord Halifax and Sommers leave this place after dinner and I go to Watford to speak with the Sollicitor Generall, and from thence come directly to Bloomsbury Square.—Yours faithfully,

RICHARD STEELE

Complete Surrender

IX

March 28, 1713

DEAR PRUE,—I will do every thing you desire your own way.—Yours ever,

RICHARD STEELE

M. Destrosses, a French prisoner, tells Miss Seward the news of his release ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

AH, Madam, I am too happy to eat, and sleep no more me. I go to bed, and fall asleep one hour ; dream see my wife, my children—wake, find so much better than dream—am so glad cannot drowsy.¹

John Sterling bids his friend farewell ♪ ♪ ♪

August 10, 1844

MY DEAR CARLYLE,—For the first time for many months it seems possible to send you a few words ; merely, however, for remembrance and farewell. On higher matters there is nothing to say. I tread the common road into the great darkness, without any thought of fear and with very much of hope. Certainty, indeed, I have none. With regard to You and Me I cannot begin to write, having nothing for it but to keep shut the lids of those secrets with all the iron weights that are in my power. Towards me it is still more true than towards England, that no man has been and done

¹ This is not really the Frenchman's letter, but an extract from one of Miss Seward's letters. Lamb copied it as a letter into one of his Commonplace Books.

The Hereafter

like you. Heaven bless you ! If I can lend a hand when THERE, that will not be wanting. It is all very strange, but not one hundredth part so sad as it seems to the standers-by.

Your wife knows my mind towards her, and will believe it without asseverations.—Yours to the last,

JOHN STERLING

XVII

THE RURAL RECLUSES

Charles Napier longs for peace



BERMUDAS, 1813

MOTHER, DEAREST MOTHER,—Would to God I was rid of this vagabond life of a felon. Peace ! peace ! when shall we have peace ?

April 20th.—Now for your Christmas letter. A year's pay to have seen aunt dance—the idea is delightful. God bless her. Oh ! my wish is to be dancing with those I love, or beating them, or anything so as to be living with you, and to pitch my sword where it ought to be—with the devil ! Henry says, if it were so the wish would come to have it back ; but my craving for rest is such that twenty years would hardly serve to satisfy me, and that is probably ten more than I am likely to live—a soldier now-a-days is old at forty. I could get on with a duck, a chicken, a turkey, a horse, a pig, a cat, a cow and a wife, in a very contented way ; why ! gardening has become so interesting to me here, as to force me to give it up, lest neglect of business should follow : it is a kind of madness, with me. Gardening from morning to

The tired Soldier

night should be my occupation if there was any one to command the regiment, it won't let me think of anything else. So hang the garden, and the sweet red and blue birds that swarm around : and hang dame Nature for making me love such things, and women's company, more than the sublime pleasure of cutting people's throats, and teaching young men to do so.

Henry is wrong. I would not be tired of home. My fondness for a quiet life would never let me desire to roam in search of adventures. A few centuries back I should have been a hermit, making free however with the rules of the order, by taking a wife instead of a staff : one cross-grained thing is as good as another. It is certain that a civil life would give me one thing which a military life would not—that is I should never, my own blessed mother, get tired of the power of living with you : that would make up for all the affliction and regret of not murdering my neighbours ; of living an exile, with the interesting anxiety of believing those I love suffer even to death, while imagination amuses itself with castles for months before it can be known what is their fate. How shocking to give up such delights for the painfulness of peace and quiet, and a beloved society. Be assured it will not be easy to persuade me of that ; and quit the army with joy will I, when the power to do so is mine : but my luck will not go so far. God bless you all not forgetting little *Mongey* [a tame mongoose brought from the East by his brother Henry] that is if he has a soul to be saved, but I see him bristling his tail at St. Peter.

May.—What a cursed life is a soldier's, no object, no end, without *appui* for head or heart, unless that unnatural one of military fame, which to a British soldier is so trifling that it is not worth gaining. A captain who

Lotus-eating at Beccles

wins the government of a country by his victories may sit down in peace, and have an interesting pursuit for the rest of his life, but war, eternal war, is horrible.

Edward FitzGerald with Nero and a Nightingale 

April 28, 1839

MY DEAR ALLEN,—Some one from this house is going to London : and I will try and write you some lines now in half an hour before dinner : I am going out for the evening to my old lady who teaches me the names of the stars, and other chaste information. You see, Master John Allen, that if I do not come to London (and I have no thought of going yet) and you will not write, there is likely to be an end of our communication : not by the way that I am never to go to London again : but not just yet. Here I live with tolerable content : perhaps with as much as most people arrive at, and what if one were properly grateful one would perhaps call perfect happiness. Here is a glorious sunshiny day : all the morning I read about Nero in Tacitus lying at full length on a bench in the garden ; a nightingale singing, and some red anemones eyeing the sun manfully not far off.

A funny mixture all this : Nero, and the delicacy of Spring : all very human, however. Then at half-past one lunch on Cambridge cream cheese : then a ride over hill and dale : then spudding up some weeds from the grass : and then coming in, I sit down to write to you, my sister winding red worsted from the back of a chair, and the most delightful little girl in the world chattering incessantly. So runs the world away. You think I live in Epicurean ease : but this happens to be a jolly day :

Mr. Gray at his Uncle's

one isn't always well, or tolerably good, the weather is not always clear, nor nightingales singing, nor Tacitus full of pleasant atrocity. But such as life is, I believe I have got hold of a good end of it. . . .

Give my love to Thackeray from your upper window across the street.

So he has lost a little child : and moreover has been sorry to do so.

Well, good-bye, my dear John Allen : Auld Lang Syne
My kind regards to your Lady.

Down to the vale this water steers,
How merrily it goes :
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

E. F. G

Geldestone Hall, Beccles

Mr. Gray describes his rural felicity ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Horace Walpole)

I WAS hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road, which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you ; suffice it that I arrived safe at my uncle's, who is a great hunter in imagination ; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing ; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort

The Scholar's Paradise

amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices ; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff ; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous. Both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverent vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds,

And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
In murm'ring sounds, the dark decrees of fate ;
While visions, as poetic eyes avow,
Cling to each leaf, and swarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of these squats ME I (*il penseroso*), and there grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and sporting squirrel gambol around me like Adam in Paradise, before he had an Eve ; but I think he did not use to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situation I often converse with my Horace, aloud too, that is, talk to you, but I do not remember that I ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us ; he is now seventy-seven years old, and has almost wholly lost his memory ; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in town in about three weeks. Adieu.

September 1737

The backward Look

William Cowper speculates on the Picts



(To the Rev. John Newton)

November 30, 1783

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have neither long visits to pay nor to receive, nor ladies to spend hours in telling me that which might be told in five minutes, yet often find myself obliged to be an economist of time, and to make the most of a short opportunity. Let our station be as retired as it may, there is no want of playthings and avocations, nor much need to seek them, in this world of ours. Business, or what presents itself to us under that imposing character, will find us out, even in the stillest retreat, and plead its importance, however trivial in reality, as a just demand upon our attention. It is wonderful how, by means of such real or seeming necessities, my time is stolen away. I have just time to observe that time is short, and by the time I have made the observation, time is gone. I have wondered in former days at the patience of the antediluvian world ; that they could endure a life almost millenary, with so little variety as seems to have fallen to their share. It is probable that they had much fewer employments than we. Their affairs lay in a narrower compass ; their libraries were indifferently furnished ; philosophical researches were carried on with much less industry and acuteness of penetration, and fiddles, perhaps, were not even invented. How then could seven or eight hundred years of life be supportable ? I have asked this question formerly, and been at a loss to resolve it ; but I think I can answer it now. I will suppose myself born a thousand years before Noah was born or thought of. I rise with the sun ; I worship ; I prepare my breakfast ;

From Olney to *B.C.*

I swallow a bucket of goat's milk, and a dozen good sizeable cakes. I fasten a new string to my bow, and my youngest boy, a lad of about thirty years of age, having played with my arrows till he has stript off all the feathers, I find myself obliged to repair them. The morning is thus spent in preparing for the chase, and it is become necessary that I should dine. I dig up my roots ; I wash them ; I boil them ; I find them not done enough ; I boil them again ; my wife is angry ; we dispute ; we settle the point ; but in the meantime the fire goes out, and must be kindled again. All this is very amusing. I hunt ; I bring home the prey ; with the skin of it I mend an old coat, or I make a new one. By this time the day is far spent ; I feel myself fatigued, and retire to rest. Thus what with tilling the ground and eating the fruit of it, hunting and walking, and running, and mending old clothes, and sleeping and rising again, I can suppose an inhabitant of the primæval world so much occupied, as to sigh over the shortness of life, and to find at the end of many centuries, that they had all slipt through his fingers, and were passed away like a shadow.

What wonder then that I, who live in a day of so much greater refinement, when there is so much more to be wanted, and wished, and to be enjoyed, should feel myself now and then pinched in point of opportunity, and at some loss for leisure to fill four sides of a sheet like this ?

Thus, however, it is, and if the ancient gentlemen to whom I have referred, and their complaints of the disproportion of time to the occasions they had for it, will not serve me as an excuse, I must even plead guilty, and confess that I am often in haste, when I have no good reason for being so. . . .

WM. COWPER

Before Miss Jekyll

Pliny describes his villa to Apollinaris



MY villa, near the foot of the hill, is so happily placed as to catch the prospect which is seen from the top; yet the acclivity by which you ascend to it is attained by so gradual and imperceptible an ascent; that you find you are on an elevation, without having been sensible of any effort in arriving at it.

Behind, but at a great distance, are the Apennine mountains. In the serenest and calmest day we receive the winds that blow from this quarter, but spent and subdued before they reach us by passing through the space interposed. The aspect of a great part of the building is full south, and invites, as it were, the afternoon sun in summer (though somewhat earlier in the winter) into a portico of well proportioned dimensions, in which there are many divisions, and a porch or entrance hall after the manner of the ancients. Before this portico is a terrace walk, adorned with various figures, having a box hedge, and an easy slope with the figures of animals in box on the opposite sides, answering alternately to each other. In the level land below is the soft, I had almost said, the liquid *Acanthus*.

A walk goes round this area shut in with tonsile evergreens, cut into various forms. This leads to the gestatio which is made in the form of a circus, with box in the middle cut into various shapes with a plantation of shrubs, kept by the shears from becoming luxuriant. The whole is fenced in by a wall, covered by box cut into steps. Beyond this lies a meadow as much set off by nature, as what I have been describing is by art, which again terminates in other meadows and fields interspersed with coppices.

The portico ends in a dining room, which opens upon

For “my familiar Friends”

the piazza with folding doors, from the windows of which you see immediately before you the meadows, and beyond a wide expanse of country.

Here also is seen the terrace and the projecting part of the villa ; as also the grove and woods of the adjacent garden walk, which has the name of hippodrome.

Opposite nearly the middle of the portico, and rather to the back, is an apartment which encloses a small area shaded by four plane trees, in the middle of which a fountain running over the brim of a marble bason refreshes with its gentle sprinkling the surrounding trees, and the verdure which they overhang. In the summer apartment there is an inner sleeping room, which shuts out both light and noise ; and adjoining this is a common dining room, for the reception of my familiar friends. A second portico looks upon the little area, and has the same prospect as the portico I have just described. There is besides another room, which being close to the nearest plane trees enjoys a constant shade and verdure. Its sides are composed of sculptured marble up to the balcony : and from thence to the ceiling there is a painting of boughs with birds sitting on them ; not less pleasing than the marble carving ; at the base of which is a little fountain, playing through several pipes into a vase, and producing a most agreeable murmur. From an angle of the portico you pass into a very spacious chamber opposite the dining room, which from some of its windows has a view of the terrace, and from others of the meadow ; while from those in front you look upon a cascade which gratifies at once both the eye and the ear ; for the water falls from a height foaming in the marble basin below. This chamber is very warm in the winter, as it is much exposed to the sun. And if the day is cloudy the sun's place is supplied

Pliny's Baths

by the heat of an adjoining stove. From thence through a spacious and cheerful undressing room you pass to the cold bathing room, in which is a large and dark bath ; but if you are disposed to swim more at large, or in warmer water, there is in the same area a large bath for that purpose, and near it a reservoir which will give you cold water if you wish to be braced again, or feel yourself too relaxed by the warm. Near the cold bath is one of moderate heat, being most kindly acted upon by the sun, but not so much affected by it as the warm bath, which projects further.

This apartment for bathing has three divisions ;—two lie open to the full sun, the third is so disposed as to have less of its heat. Over the undressing room is built the tennis court, which admits of many kinds of games by means of its different circles. Near the bath is the staircase which leads to the inclosed portico, but not till the three apartments have been passed ; and of those one looks upon that little area in which are the four plane trees, another upon the meadows, and the third upon several vineyards ; so that they have their respective aspects and views. At one end of the enclosed portico, and taken off from it, is a chamber that looks upon the hippodrome, the vineyards and the mountains ; and next to this is a room having the sun full upon it, especially in the winter. To this succeeds an apartment which connects the hippodrome with the house.

Such is the face and frontage of our villa. On the side of it is a summer inclosed portico, the position of which is high, so as not only to command the vineyards, but to seem to touch them. From the middle of this portico you enter a dining room, cooled by the salubrious breezes from the valleys of the Apennines. From the very large windows at the back you have a prospect of

The Summer Portico

the vineyards, as you have also from the folding doors, as if you were looking from the summer portico, along that side of the last mentioned dining room, where there are no windows, runs a staircase affording a private access for serving of entertainments. At the end of this room is a sleeping chamber ; underneath this apartment is an enclosed portico ; looking like a grotto, which during the summer, having a coolness of its own from being impervious to the sun, neither admits nor needs any breezes from without. After you have passed both these porticos, and where the dining room ends, you again enter a portico, used in the forenoon during winter, and in the evening during summer ; it leads to two general apartments, one containing four sleeping rooms, the other three, which in their turn have the benefit of the sun or shade. The hippodrome extends its length before this agreeably disposed range of building, entirely open in the middle, so that the eye on the first entrance sees the whole. It is surrounded by plane trees, which are clothed with ivy, so that while their tops flourish in their own, their bodies are decked in borrowed verdure, the ivy thus wanders over the trunks and branches, and by passing from one plane tree to another unites the neighbours together. Between these plane trees box trees are interposed, and the laurel stationed behind the box, adds its shade to that of the planes. This plantation forming the straight boundary on each side of the hippodrome, or great garden walk, ends in a semicircle, is varied in form ; this part is surrounded and sheltered with cypress trees which cast round a dark and solemn shade ; while the day breaks in upon the interior circular walks, which are numerous.

You are regaled at this spot with the fragrance of roses, while you find the coldness of the shade agree-

The fantastic Box

ably tempered and corrected by the warmth of the sun. Having passed through these winding walks, you re-enter the walk with its straight enclosure, but not to this only, for many ways branch out from it, divided by box-hedges. Here you have a little meadow, and here the box is cut into a thousand different forms ; sometimes into letters, expressing the name of the owner, sometimes that of the artificer. In some places are little pillars, intermingled alternately with fruit trees ; when on a sudden, while you are gazing on these objects of elegant workmanship, your view is opened on an imitation of natural scenery, in the middle of which is a group of dwarf plane trees.

Beyond these there commences a walk, abounding in the smooth and flexible acanthus, and trees cut into a variety of figures and names ; at the upper end of which is a seat of white marble, overspread with vines, which are supported by four small Carystian pillars. From this seat the water issues through little pipes, as if pressed out by the persons sitting upon it ; and first falling into a stone reservoir, is received by a polished marble basin, its descent being secretly so managed as always to keep the basin full, without running over.

Here when I take a repast ; I make a table of the margin of the basin for the heavier and more substantial dishes, the lighter being made to swim about in the form of little ships and aquatic birds. Opposite is a fountain which is incessantly sending forth and taking back its contents, for the water which is sent up to a height falls back upon itself, there being two openings, through one of which it is thrown out, and through the other absorbed again.

Opposite the seat or alcove before mentioned, a

Pliny's Summer-House

summer-house stands which reflects as much beauty upon the alcove as it borrows from it. It dazzles with its polished marble, and with its projecting doors opens into a lawn a vivid green. From its upper and lower windows the eye is greeted with other verdant scenes. Connected with this summer-house, and yet distinct from it, is a little apartment furnished with a couch to repose upon, with windows all round it, and yet sufficiently shaded and obscured by a most luxuriant vine which climbs to the top and spreads itself over the whole building.

You repose here, just as if you were in a grove, only that you are not, as in a grove, liable to be inconvenienced by a shower.

In this place also a fountain rises, but in the same moment disappears.

In many places there are seats of marble, which, like the summer-house itself, offer a great relief and accommodation to such as are fatigued with walking.

Near each seat is a little fountain. And throughout the whole hippodrome, rivulets run murmuring along, conducted by pipes, and taking whatever turn the hand of art may give them ; and by these the different green plots are severally refreshed, and sometimes the whole together.

I should have avoided this particularity ; for fear of being thought too minute, if I had not set out with the resolution of taking you into every corner of my house and gardens. I have not been afraid of your being weary of reading the description of a place which I am sure you would not think it wearisome to visit ; especially as you can lay down my letter, and rest as often as you think proper. I must also confess, that in this description I have been indulging the attachment I feel to my villa.

“Alone I did it”

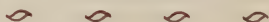
I have an affection for a place which was either begun or completed, but principally begun, by myself. In a word (for why should I not disclose to you my opinion, or, if you will, my error), I consider it to be the first duty of a writer to keep his subject in view, and from time to time to ask himself what he has professed to write upon. And he may be sure, that if he keeps close to his subject, he cannot be tedious; but most tedious, indeed, will he be, if he suffer anything to call him away, or draw him off his subject. You see how many verses Homer and Virgil have bestowed respectively upon the description of the arms of Achilles and Æneas; and neither of these poets can be called prolix on this subject, because he does no more than execute his professed design. You see how Aratus searches out and collects the smallest stars; and yet he is not chargeable with being circumstantial to excess. For this is not the diffusiveness of the writer, but of the subject itself. In the same manner (to compare small things with great), in striving to lay before your eyes my entire villa, if I take not care to wander or deviate from my subject, it is not of the size of my letter which describes, but of the villa which is described, that you are to complain. But I will return to the point from which I set out with this digression; lest I should fall under the censure of my own rules. You have before you the reason why I prefer my Tuscan villa to those which I possess at Tusculum, Tibur, and Præneste.

For in addition to what I have related concerning it, I enjoy here a deeper, solider, and securer leisure; no calls of public business; nothing near me to summon me from my quiet. All is calm and still around me; which character of the place operates like a more genial climate or clearer atmosphere in rendering the situation

With Claire at the Casino

salubrious. Here I am at the top of my strength in body and mind ; the one I keep in exercise by study ; the other by hunting. Nor does any place agree better with my family. Certainly, hitherto, (if it be not too like boasting to talk so,) I have not lost one of all those whom I brought with me hither, and may heaven continue that happiness to me, and that honour to my Villa. Farewell !

Shelley bathes at Lucca



BAGNI DI LUCCA, *July 25, 1818*

MY DEAR PEACOCK,—I received on the same day your letters marked five and six, the one directed to Pisa, and the other to Livorno, and I can assure you they are most welcome visitors.

Our life here is as unvaried by any external events as if we were at Marlow, where a sail up the river or a journey to London makes an epoch. Since I last wrote to you, I have ridden over to Lucca, once with Claire, and once alone ; and we have been over to the Casino, where I cannot say there is anything remarkable, the women being far removed from anything which the most liberal annotator could interpret into beauty or grace, and apparently possessing no intellectual excellencies to compensate the deficiency. I assure you it is well that it is so, for these dances, especially the waltz, are so exquisitely beautiful that it would be a little dangerous to the newly unfrozen senses and imaginations of us migrators from the neighbourhood of the Pole. As it is—except in the dark—there could be no peril. The atmosphere here, unlike that of the rest of Italy, is diversified with clouds, which grow in the middle of the





Jupiter and Venus

day, and sometimes bring thunder and lightning, and hail about the size of a pigeon's egg, and decrease towards the evening, leaving only those finely woven webs of vapour which we see in English skies, and flocks of fleecy and slowly-moving clouds, which all vanish before sunset; and the nights are for ever serene, and we see a star in the east at sunset—I think it is Jupiter—almost as fine as Venus was last summer; but it wants a certain silver and aerial radiance, and soft yet piercing splendour, which belongs, I suppose, to the latter planet by virtue of its at once divine and female nature. I have forgotten to ask the ladies if Jupiter produces on them the same effect. I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere. In the evening Mary and I often take a ride, for horses are cheap in this country. In the middle of the day, I bathe in a pool or fountain, formed in the middle of the forests by a torrent. It is surrounded on all sides by precipitous rocks, and the waterfall of the stream which forms it falls into it on one side with perpetual dashing. Close to it, on the top of the rocks, are alders, and, above, the great chestnut trees, whose long and pointed leaves pierce the deep blue sky in strong relief. The water of this pool, which, to venture an unrhythmical paraphrase, is “sixteen feet long and ten feet wide,” is as transparent as the air, so that the stones and sand at the bottom seem, as it were, trembling in the light of noonday. It is exceedingly cold also. My custom is to undress and sit on the rocks, reading Herodotus, until the perspiration has subsided, and then to leap from the edge of the rock into this fountain—a practice in the hot weather exceedingly refreshing. This torrent is composed, as it were, of a succession of pools and waterfalls, up which I sometimes amuse myself by climbing when I bathe, and receiving the spray all over

True to Windsor and Marlow

my body, whilst I clamber up the moist crags with difficulty. . . .

What pleasure would it have given me if the wings of imagination could have divided the space which divides us, and I could have been of your party! I have seen nothing so beautiful as Virginia Water in its kind, and my thoughts for ever cling to Windsor Forest, and the copses of Marlow, like the clouds which hang upon the woods of the mountains, low trailing, and though they pass away, leave their best dew when they themselves have faded.

Mr. Shenstone gives Mr. Jago an account of his country contentments    

THE LEASOWES, *March 23, 1747-48*

DEAR SIR,—I have sent Tom over for the papers which I left under your inspection; having nothing to add upon this head, but that the more freely and particularly you give me your opinion, the greater will be the obligation which I shall have to acknowledge. I shall be very glad if I happen to receive a good large bundle of your own compositions; in regard to which, I will observe any commands which you shall please to lay upon me.

I am favoured with a certain correspondence, by way of letter, which I told you I should be glad to cultivate; and I find it very entertaining. Pray did you receive my answer to your last letter, sent by way of London?

I should be extremely sorry to be debarred the pleasure of writing to you by the post, as often as I feel a violent propensity to describe the notable incidents of my life; which amount to about as much as the tinsel of your

At The Leasowes

little boy's hobby-horse. I am on the point of purchasing a couple of busts for the niches of my hall ; and believe me, my good friend, I never proceed one step in ornamenting my little farm, but I enjoy the hopes of rendering it more agreeable to you, and the small circle of acquaintance which sometimes favour me with their company. I shall be extremely glad to see you and Mr. Fancourt when the trees are green ; that is, in May ; but I would not have you content yourself with a single visit this summer.

If Mr. Hardy (to whom you will make my compliments) inclines to favour me so far, you must calculate so as to wait on him whenever he finds it convenient ; though I have better hopes of making his reception here agreeable to him when my lord Dudley comes down. I wonder how he would like the scheme I am upon, of exchanging a large tankard for a silver standish. I have had a couple of paintings given me since you were here. One of them is a Madonna, valued, as it is said, at ten guineas in Italy, but which you would hardly purchase at the price of five shillings. However, I am endeavouring to make it out to be one of Carlo Maratti's, who was a first hand, and famous for Madonnas ; even so as to be nick-named *Cartuccio delle Madonne*, by Salvator Rosa. Two letters of the cypher (CM) agree ; what shall I do with regard to the third ? It is a small piece, and sadly blackened. It is about the size (though not quite the shape) of the Bacchus over the parlour door, and has much such a frame.

A person may amuse himself almost as cheaply as he pleases. I find no small delight in rearing all sorts of poultry ; geese, turkeys, pullets, ducks, etc.

I am also somewhat smitten with a blackbird which I have purchased : a very fine one ; brother by father, but

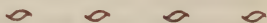
Shenstone's Blackbird

not by mother, to the unfortunate bird you so beautifully describe, a copy of which description you must not fail to send me ;—but as I said before, one may easily habituate one's self to cheap amusements ; that is, rural ones (for all town amusements are horridly expensive) ;—I would have you cultivate your garden ; plant flowers ; have a bird or two in the hall (they will at least amuse your children) ; write now and then a song ; buy now and then a book , write now and then a letter to your most sincere friend, and affectionate servant.

P.S.—I hope you have exhausted all your spirit of criticism upon my verses, that you may have none left to cavil at this letter ; for I am ashamed to think, that you, in particular, should receive the dullest I ever wrote in my life.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Jago. She can go a little abroad, you say.—Tell her, I should be proud to show her the Leasowes. Adieu !

Pliny returns to Nature



(To Cornelius Tacitus)

YOU will certainly laugh (and laugh you may) when I tell you, that your old acquaintance is turned sportsman, and has taken three noble boars. What ! (you will say, with astonishment) Pliny !—*Even he.* However, I indulge, at the same time, my beloved inactivity ; and whilst I sat at my nets, you would have found me, not with my spear, but my pencil and tablet by my side. I mused and wrote, being resolved, if I returned with my hands empty, at least to come home with my memorandums full. Believe me, this manner

The literary Huntsman

of studying is not to be despised : you cannot conceive how greatly exercise contributes to enliven the imagination. There is, besides, something in the solemnity of the venerable woods with which one is surrounded, together with that profound silence which is observed on these occasions, that strongly inclines the mind to meditation. For the future, therefore, let me advise you, whenever you hunt, to take your pencil and tablets with you, as well as your basket and bottle ; for be assured you will find Minerva as fond of traversing the hills as Diana. Farewel.

William Cowper in at the death



(To Lady Hesketh)

THE LODGE, *March 3, 1788*

ONE day, last week, Mrs. Unwin and I, having taken our morning walk and returning homeward through the wilderness, met the Throckmortons.

A minute after we had met them, we heard the cry of hounds at no great distance, and mounting the broad stump of an elm which had been felled, and by the aid of which we were enabled to look over the wall, we saw them.

They were all at that time in our orchard ; presently we heard a terrier, belonging to Mrs. Throckmorton, which you may remember by the name of Fury, yelping with much vehemence, and saw her running through the thickets within a few yards of us at her utmost speed, as if in pursuit of something which we doubted not was the fox. Before we could reach the other end of the wilderness, the hounds entered also ; and when we

The sagacious Huntsman

arrived at the gate which opens into the grove, there we found the whole weary cavalcade assembled.

The huntsman dismounting, begged leave to follow his hounds on foot, for he was sure, he said, that they had killed him : a conclusion which I suppose he drew from their profound silence.

He was accordingly admitted, and with a sagacity that would not have dishonoured the best hound in the world, pursuing precisely the same track which the fox and dogs had taken, though he had never had a glimpse of either after their first entrance through the rails, arrived where he found the slaughtered prey. He soon produced dead reynard, and rejoined us in the grove with all his dogs about him.

Having an opportunity to see a ceremony, which I was pretty sure would never fall in my way again, I determined to stay and to notice all that passed with the most minute attention.

The huntsman having by the aid of a pitchfork lodged reynard on the arm of an elm, at the height of about nine feet from the ground, there left him for a considerable time. The gentlemen sat on their horses contemplating the fox, for which they had toiled so hard ; and the hounds assembled at the foot of the tree, with faces not less expressive of the most rational delight, contemplated the same object. The huntsman remounted ; cut off a foot, and threw it to the hounds ;—one of them swallowed it whole like a bolus. He then once more alighted, and drawing down the fox by the hinder legs, desired the people, who were by this time rather numerous, to open a lane for him to the right and left. He was instantly obeyed, when throwing the fox to the distance of some yards, and screaming like a fiend, “tear him to pieces”—at least six times repeatedly, he con-

Cowper rivals *Nimrod*

signed him over absolutely to the pack, who in a few minutes devoured him completely. Thus, my dear, as Virgil says, what none of the gods could have ventured to promise me, time itself, pursuing its accustomed course, has of its own accord presented me with.

I have been in at the death of a fox, and you now know as much of the matter as I, who am as well informed as any sportsman in England.—Yours, W. C.

XVIII

SHADOWS

Sir Walter Scott accepts the blow ♪ ♪ ♪

EDINBURGH, *January 20, 1826*

MY DEAR LOCKHART,—I have your kind letter. Whenever I heard that Constable had made a *cessio fori*, I thought it became me to make public how far I was concerned in these matters, and to offer my fortune so far as it was prestable, and the completion of my literary engagements (the better thing almost of the two); to make good all claims upon Ballantyne & Co.; and even supposing that neither Hurst & Co. nor Constable & Co. ever pay a penny they owe me, my old age will be far from destitute—even if my right hand should lose its cunning. This is the *very worst* that can befall me; but I have little doubt that, with ordinary management, the affairs of those houses will turn out favourably. It is needless to add that I will not engage myself, as Constable desires, for £20,000 more—or £2000—or £200. I have advanced enough already to pay other people's debts, and now must pay my own.

Excuses for Constable

If our friend C. had set out a fortnight earlier nothing of all this would have happened ; but he let the hour of distress precede the hour of provision, and he and others must pay for it. Yet don't hint this to him, poor fellow ; it is an infirmity of nature.

I have made my matters public, and have had splendid offers of assistance, all which I have declined, for I would rather bear my own burden than subject myself to obligation. There is but one way in such cases.

It is easy, no doubt, for my friend to blame me for entering into connection with commercial matters at all. But I wish to know what I could have done better, excluded from the Bar, and then from all profits for six years, by my colleague's prolonged life. Literature was not in those days what poor Constable has made it ; and, with my little capital, I was too glad to make commercially the means of supporting my family. I got but £600 for the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and—it was a price that made men's hair stand on end—£1000 for *Marmion*. I have been far from suffering by James Ballantyne. I owe it to him to say, that his difficulties, as well as his advantages, are owing to me. I trusted too much Constable's assurances of his own and his correspondents' stability, but yet I believe he was only sanguine. The upshot is just what Hurst & Co. and Constable may be able to pay me ; if 15s. in the pound ; I shall not complain of my loss, for I have gained many thousands in my day. But while I live I shall regret the downfall of Constable's house, for never did there exist so intelligent and so liberal an establishment.

They went too far when money was plenty, that is certain ; yet if every author in Britain had taxed himself half a year's income, he should have kept up the house

Taking up the Burden

which first broke in upon the monopoly of the London trade, and made letters what they now are.

I have had visits from all the monied people, offering their purses—and those who are creditors, sending their managers and treasurers to assure me of their joining in and adopting any measures I may propose. I am glad of this for their sake, and for my own ; for although I shall not desire to steer, yet I am the only person that can *conn*, as Lieutenant Hatchway says, to any good purpose.

A very odd anonymous offer I had of £30,000, which I rejected, as I did every other. Unless I die, I shall beat up against this foul weather. A penny I will not borrow from any one. Since my creditors are content to be patient, I have the means of righting them perfectly, and the confidence to employ them. I should have given a good deal to have avoided the *coup d'éclat* ; but that having taken place, I would not give sixpence for any other results. I fear you will think I am writing in the heat of excited resistance to bad fortune. My dear Lockhart, I am as calm and temperate as ever you saw me, and working at *Woodstock* like a very tiger. I am grieved for Lady Scott and Anne, who cannot conceive adversity can have the better of them, even for a moment. If it teaches a little of the frugality which I never had the heart to enforce when money was plenty, and it seemed cruel to interrupt the enjoyment of it in the way they liked best, it will be well.

Kindest love to Sophia, and tell her to study the song and keep her spirits up. Tyne heart, tyne all ; and it is making more of money than it is worth to grieve about it. Kiss Johnnie for me. How glad I am fortune carried you to London before these reverses happened, as they would have embittered parting, and

Collingwood's Sword

made it resemble the boat leaving the sinking ship.—
Yours, dear Lockhart, affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT

Lord Collingwood thanks the Duke of Clarence for ennobling him and tells him of Nelson's death ♡

"QUEEN," OFF CARTHAGENA

December 12, 1805

I CANNOT express how great my gratitude is to your Royal Highness, for the high honour which you have done me by your letter, congratulating me on the success of His Majesty's fleet against his enemies.

This instance of condescension, and mark of your Royal Highness's kindness to one of the most humble, but one of the most faithful of His Majesty's servants is deeply engraved in my heart. I shall ever consider it as a great happiness to have merited your Royal Highness's approbation, of which the sword which you have presented to me is a testimony so highly honourable to me; for which I beg your Royal Highness will accept my best thanks, and the assurance that, whenever His Majesty's service demands it, I will endeavour to use it in support of our country's honour, and to the advancement of His Majesty's glory.

The loss which your Royal Highness and myself have sustained in the death of Lord Nelson can only be estimated by those who had the happiness of sharing his friendship.

He had all the qualities that adorn the human heart, and a head which, by its quickness of perception and depth of penetration, qualified him for the highest offices of his profession. But why am I making these observa-

Nelson's last Moments

tions to your Royal Highness, who knew him? Because I cannot speak of him but to do him honour.

Your Royal Highness desires to know the particular circumstance of his death. I have seen Captain Hardy but for a few minutes since, and understood from him, that at the time the *Victory* was very closely engaged in rather a crowd of ships, and that Lord Nelson was commanding some ship that was conducted much to his satisfaction, when a musket-ball struck him on the left breast. Captain Hardy took hold of him to support him, when he smiled, and said, "Hardy, I believe they have done it at last."

He was carried below; and when the ship was disengaged from the crowd, he sent an officer to inform me that he was wounded. I asked the officer if his wound was dangerous. He hesitated; then said he hoped it was not; but I saw the fate of my friend in his eye; for his look told what his tongue could not utter. About an hour after, when the action was over, Captain Hardy brought me the melancholy account of his death. He inquired frequently how the battle went, and expressed joy when the enemy were striking; in his last moments shewing an anxiety for the glory of his country, though regardless of what related to his own person.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your Royal Highness's most obedient and most humble servant.

Charles Lamb loses an old friend



COLEBROOKE ROW, ISLINGTON

Saturday, January 20, 1827

DEAR ROBINSON,—I called upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor Norris

“None to call me Charley now”

has been lying dying for now almost a week, such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed a strong constitution ! Whether he knew me or not, I know not, or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes ; but the group I saw about him I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his wife and two daughters, and poor deaf Richard, his son, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs. Norris. Speaking was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time I hope it is all over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships ever since. Those are friendships which outlive a second generation. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now. He was the last link that bound me to the Temple. You are but of yesterday. In him seem to have died the old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. Letters he knew nothing of, nor did his reading extend beyond the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Yet there was a pride of literature about him from being amongst books (he was librarian), and from some scraps of doubtful Latin which he had picked up in his office of entering students, that gave him very diverting airs of pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, when he had been in vain trying to make out a black-letter text of Chaucer in the Temple Library, he laid it down and told me that—"in those old books, Charley, there is sometimes a deal of very indifferent spelling ;" and seemed to console himself in the reflection ! His jokes, for he had his jokes, are now ended, but they were old trusty perennials, staples

Randal Norris

that pleased after *decies repetita*, and were always as good as new. One song he had, which was reserved for the night of Christmas-day, which we always spent in the Temple. It was an old thing, and spoke of the flat bottoms of our foes and the possibility of their coming over in darkness, and alluded to threats of an invasion many years blown over; and when he came to the part

“We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
In spite of the devil and *Brussels Gazette*!”

his eyes would sparkle as with the freshness of an impending event. And what is the *Brussels Gazette* now? I cry while I enumerate these trifles. “How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?” His poor good girls will now have to receive their afflicted mother in an inaccessible hovel in an obscure village in Herts, where they have been long struggling to make a school without effect; and poor deaf Richard—and the more helpless for being so—is thrown on the wide world.

My first motive in writing, and, indeed, in calling on you, was to ask if you were enough acquainted with any of the Benchers, to lay a plain statement before them of the circumstances of the family. I almost fear not, for you are of another hall. But if you can oblige me and my poor friend, who is now insensible to any favours, pray exert yourself. You cannot say too much good of poor Norris and his poor wife.—Yours ever,

CHARLES LAMB

Sweet Comfort

Jeremy Taylor tells John Evelyn of the death of a
little son ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

July 19, 1656

DEARE SIR,—I am in some little disorder by reason
of the death of a little child of mine, a boy that
lately made us very glad ; but now he rejoyces in his
little orbe, while we thinke, and sigh, and long to be as
safe as he is. . . .

Jeremy Taylor wishes John Evelyn well ♪ ♪

September 15, 1656

SIR,—I pray God continue your health and his
blessings to you and your deare lady and pretty
babies ; for which I am daily obliged to pray, and to
use all opportunities by which I can signify that I
am, deare Sir, your most affectionate and endeared
servant,

JER. TAYLOR

Jeremy Taylor comforts John Evelyn in the death
of a son ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

DEARE SIR,—If dividing and sharing greifes were
like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you
would find your streame much abated ; for I account
myselfe to have a great cause of sorrow, not onely in
the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes,
but in the losse of that pretty person, your strangely
hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my owne sorrowes with-
out adding to yours ; and the causes of my real sadnesse
in your loss are so just and so reasonable, that I can

“Two bright Starres”

no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourne : so certaine it is that greife does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch, and by joining mine to yours, I doe but encrease the flame. *Hoc me malè urit*, is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But, Sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart ; and if I can but remooove the darke side of the lanthorne, you have enoughe within you to warme yourself, and to shine to others. Remember, Sir, your two boyes are two bright starres, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them agayne. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy termes ; nothing but to be borne and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are ; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable greife ; and, indeed, though the greife hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no losers, but you are the person that complains, doe but consider what you would have suffer'd for their interest : you [would] have suffered them to goe from you, to be great princes in a strange country : and if you can be content to suffer your owne inconvenience for their interest, you command [commend ?] your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. But you have said and done well, when you looke upon it as a rod of God ; and he that so smites here will spare hereafter : and if you, by patience and submission, imprint the discipline upon your own flesh, you kill the cause, and make the effect very tolerable ; because it is, in some sense, chosen, and therefore, in no sense,

Christian to Christian

insufferable. Sir, if you doe not looke to it, time will snatch your honour from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by Christian philosophy which time will doe alone. And if you consider, that of the bravest men in the world, we find the seldomest stories of their children, and the apostles had none, and thousands of the worthiest persons, that sound most in story, died childlesse: you will find it is a rare act of Providence so to impose upon worthy men a necessity of perpetuating their names by worthy actions and discourses, governments and reasonings. If the breach be never repair'd, it is because God does not see it fitt to be; and if you will be of his mind, it will be much the better. But, Sir, you will pardon my zeale and passion for your comfort, I will readily confesse that you have no need of any discourse from me to comfort you. Sir, now you have an opportunity of serving God by passive graces; strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel and comfort, stand in the breaches of your owne family, and make it appeare that you are more to her than ten sons. Sir, by the assistance of Almighty God, I purpose to wait on you some time next weeke, that I may be a witnesse of your Christian courage and bravery; and that I may see, that God never displeases you, as long as the main stake is preserved, I meane your hopes and confidences of heaven. Sir, I shal pray you for all that you can want, that is, some degrees of comfort and a present mind; and shal alwayes doe you honour, and faine also would doe you service, if it were in the power, as it is in the affections and desires of, dear Sir, your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

JER. TAYLOR

February 17, 1657-8

No Letters in the Grave

Dr. Johnson moralizes on death



“As he opened a note which his servant brought to him, he said, ‘An odd thought strikes me: we shall receive no letters in the grave.’”

BOSWELL (of DR. JOHNSON)

XIX
SIX POSTSCRIPTS

POSTSCRIPT I

REMARKS ON THE GENTLEST ART
BY GOOD INTELLECTS

I. Dr. Johnson (in his *Dictionary*)

LETTER

2. A written message ; an epistle.

They used to write it on the top of
letters.—*Shakespeare*.

I have a *letter* from her
Of such contents as you will wonder
at.—*Shakespeare*.

When a Spaniard would write a *letter* by him, the Indian would marvel how it should be possible, that he, to whom he came, should be able to know all things.—*Abbot*.

The asses will do very well for trumpeters, and the hares will make excellent *letter* carriers.—*L'Estrange's Fables*.

The stile of *letters* ought to be free, easy, and natural ; as near approaching to familiar conversation as possible : the two best qualities in conversation are, good humour and good breeding ; those *letters* are therefore certainly the best that show the most of these two qualities.—*Walsh*.

Sam in the City

Mrs. P. B. has writ to me, and is one of the best *letter* writers I know ; very good sense, civility and friendship, without any stiffness or constraint.—*Swift*.

II. Samuel and Antony Weller

MR. WELLER having obtained leave of absence from Mr. Pickwick, who, in his then state of excitement and worry, was by no means displeased at being left alone, set forth, long before the appointed hour, and having plenty of time at his disposal, sauntered down as far as the Mansion House, where he paused and contemplated, with a face of great calmness and philosophy, the numerous cads and drivers of short stages who assemble near that famous place of resort, to the great terror and confusion of the old-lady population of these realms. Having loitered here, for half an hour or so, Mr. Weller turned, and began wending his way towards Leadenhall Market, through a variety of bye streets and courts. As he was sauntering away his spare time, and stopped to look at almost every object that met his gaze, it is by no means surprising that Mr. Weller should have paused before a small stationer's and print-seller's window ; but without further explanation it does appear surprising that his eyes should have no sooner rested on certain pictures which were exposed for sale therein, than he gave a sudden start, smote his right leg with great vehemence, and exclaimed, with energy, "If it hadn't been for this, I should ha' forgot all about it, till it was too late !"

The particular picture on which Sam Weller's eyes were fixed, as he said this, was a highly-coloured representation of a couple of human hearts skewered together with an arrow, cooking before a cheerful fire. while a

The Valentine

male and female cannibal in modern attire, the gentleman being clad in a blue coat and white trousers, and the lady in a deep red pelisse with a parasol of the same, were approaching the meal with hungry eyes, up a serpentine gravel path leading thereunto. A decidedly indelicate young gentleman, in a pair of wings and nothing else, was depicted as superintending the cooking ; a representation of the spire of the church in Langham Place, London, appeared in the distance ; and the whole formed a "valentine," of which, as a written inscription in the window testified, there was a large assortment within, which the shopkeeper pledged himself to dispose of, to his countrymen generally, at the reduced rate of one-and-sixpence each.

"I should ha' forgot it ; I should certainly ha' forgot it !" said Sam ; so saying, he at once stepped into the stationer's shop, and requested to be served with a sheet of the best gilt-edged letter-paper, and a hard-nibbed pen which could be warranted not to splutter. These articles having been promptly supplied, he walked on direct towards Leadenhall Market at a good round pace, very different from his recent lingering one. Looking round him, he there beheld a sign-board on which the painter's art had delineated something remotely resembling a cerulean elephant with an aquiline nose in lieu of trunk. Rightly conjecturing that this was the Blue Boar himself, he stepped into the house, and inquired concerning his parent.

"He won't be here this three-quarters of an hour or more," said the young lady who superintended the domestic arrangements of the Blue Boar.

"Wery good, my dear," replied Sam. "Let me have nine-penn'oth o' brandy-and-water luke, and the inkstand, will you, miss?"

A sympathetic Tongue

The brandy-and-water luke, and the inkstand, having been carried into the little parlour, and the young lady having carefully flattened down the coals to prevent their blazing, and carried away the poker to preclude the possibility of the fire being stirred, without the full privity and concurrence of the Blue Boar being first had and obtained, Sam Weller sat himself down in a box near the stove, and pulled out the sheet of gilt-edged letter-paper, and the hard-nibbed pen. Then looking carefully at the pen to see that there were no hairs in it, and dusting down the table, so that there might be no crumbs of bread under the paper, Sam tucked up the cuffs of his coat, squared his elbows, and composed himself to write.

To ladies and gentlemen who are not in the habit of devoting themselves practically to the science of penmanship, writing a letter is no very easy task ; it being always considered necessary in such cases for the writer to recline his head on his left arm, so as to place his eyes as nearly as possible on a level with the paper, and, while glancing sideways at the letters he is constructing, to form with his tongue imaginary characters to correspond. These motions, although unquestionably of the greatest assistance to original composition, retard in some degree the progress of the writer ; and Sam had unconsciously been a full hour and a half writing words in small text, smearing out wrong letters with his little finger, and putting in new ones which required going over very often to render them visible through the old blots, when he was roused by the opening of the door and the entrance of his parent.

"Vell, Sammy," said the father.

"Vell, my Prooshan Blue," responded the son, laying down his pen. "What's the last bulletin about mother-in-law?"

A Father's Warning

"Mrs. Veller passed a very good night, but is uncommon perwerse and unpleasant this mornin'. Signed upon oath, S. Veller, Esquire Senior. That's the last vun as was issued, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, untying his shawl.

"No better yet?" inquired Sam.

"All the symptoms aggerawated," replied Mr. Weller, shaking his head. "But wot's that you're a-doin' of? Pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, Sammy?"

"I've done now," said Sam, with slight embarrassment; "I've been a-writin'."

"So I see," replied Mr. Weller. "Not to any young 'ooman, I hope, Sammy?"

"Why, it's no use a-sayin' it ain't," replied Sam; "it's a valentine."

"A what!" exclaimed Mr. Weller, apparently horror-stricken by the word.

"A valentine," replied Sam.

"Samivel, Samivel," said Mr. Weller, in reproachful accents, "I didn't think you'd ha' done it. Arter the warnin' you've had o' your father's wicious propensities; arter all I've said to you upon this here wery subject; arter actiwally seein' and bein' in the company o' your own mother-in-law, vich I should ha' thought wos a moral lesson as no man could never ha' forgotten to his dyin' day! I didn't think you'd ha' done it, Sammy, I didn't think you'd ha' done it!" These reflections were too much for the good old man. He raised Sam's tumbler to his lips and drank off its contents.

"Wot's the matter now?" said Sam.

"Nev'r mind, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, "it'll be a wery agonisin' trial to me at my time of life, but I'm pretty tough, that's vun consolation, as the wery old turkey remarked wen the farmer said he wos afeerd he should be obliged to kill him for the London market."

Mr. Weller is mollified

"Wot'll be a trial?" inquired Sam.

"To see you married, Sammy—to see you a dilluded wictim, and thinkin' in your innocence that it's all wery capital," replied Mr. Weller. "It's a dreadful trial to a father's feelin's, that 'ere, Sammy."

"Nonsense," said Sam. "I ain't a-goin' to get married, don't you fret yourself about that; I know you're a judge of these things. Order in your pipe and I'll read you the letter. There!"

We cannot distinctly say whether it was the prospect of the pipe, or the consolatory reflection that a fatal disposition to get married ran in the family, and couldn't be helped, which calmed Mr. Weller's feelings, and caused his grief to subside. We should be rather disposed to say that the result was attained by combining the two sources of consolation, for he repeated the second in a low tone, very frequently; ringing the bell meanwhile, to order in the first. He then divested himself of his upper coat; and lighting the pipe and placing himself in front of the fire with his back towards it, so that he could feel its full heat, and recline against the mantelpiece at the same time, turned towards Sam, and, with a countenance greatly mollified by the softening influence of tobacco, requested him to "fire away."

Sam dipped his pen into the ink to be ready for any corrections, and began with a very theatrical air—

"'Lovely——'"

"Stop," said Mr. Weller, ringing the bell. "A double glass o' the invariable, my dear."

"Very well, sir," replied the girl; who with great quickness appeared, vanished, returned, and disappeared.

"They seem to know your ways here," observed Sam.

"Yes," replied his father, "I've been here before, in my time. Go on Sammy."

“That ain’t proper”

“‘Lovely creetur,’” repeated Sam.

“’Tain’t in poetry, is it?” interposed his father.

“No, no,” replied Sam.

“Wery glad to hear it,” said Mr. Weller. “Poetry’s unnat’ral; no man ever talked poetry ’cept a beadle on boxin’-day, or Warren’s blackin’, or Rowland’s oil, or some of them low fellows; never you let yourself down to talk poetry, my boy. Begin again, Sammy.”

Mr. Weller resumed his pipe with critical solemnity, and Sam once more commenced, and read as follows:—

“‘Lovely creetur I feel myself a damned——’”

“That ain’t proper,” said Mr. Weller, taking his pipe from his mouth.

“No; it ain’t ‘damned,’” observed Sam, holding the letter up to the light, “it’s ‘shamed,’ there’s a blot there—‘I feel myself ashamed.’”

“Wery good,” said Mr. Weller. “Go on.”

“‘Feel myself ashamed, and completely cir——’ I forget what this here word is,” said Sam, scratching his head with the pen, in vain attempts to remember.

“Why don’t you look at it, then?” inquired Mr. Weller.

“So I *am* a-lookin’ at it,” replied Sam, “but there’s another blot. Here’s a ‘c,’ and a ‘i,’ and a ‘d.’”

“Circumwented, p’raps,” suggested Mr. Weller.

“No, it ain’t that,” said Sam; “‘circumscribed’; that’s it.”

“That ain’t as good a word as ‘circumwented,’ Sammy,” said Mr. Weller gravely.

“Think not?” said Sam.

“Nothin’ like it,” replied his father.

“But don’t you think it means more?” inquired Sam.

“Vell p’raps it’s a more tenderer word,” said Mr. Weller, after a few moments’ reflection. “Go on, Sammy.”

“‘Feel myself ashamed and completely circumscribed

Euphues condemned

in a-dressin' of you, for you *are* a nice gal and nothin' but it.'"

"That's a wery pretty sentiment," said the elder Mr. Weller, removing his pipe to make way for the remark.

"Yes, I think it is rayther good," observed Sam, highly flattered.

"Wot I like in that 'ere style of writin'," said the elder Mr. Weller, "is, that there ain't no callin' names in it—no Wenuses, nor nothin' o' that kind. Wot's the good o' callin' a young 'ooman a Venus or a angel, Sammy?"

"Ah ! what, indeed?" replied Sam.

"You might jist as well call her a griffin, or a unicorn, or a king's arms at once, which is wery well known to be a col-lection o' fabulous animals," added Mr. Weller.

"Just as well," replied Sam.

"Drive on, Sammy," said Mr. Weller.

Sam complied with the request, and proceeded as follows ; his father continuing to smoke, with a mixed expression of wisdom and complacency, which was particularly edifying.

"'Afore I see you, I thought all women was alike.'"

"So they are," observed the elder Mr. Weller parenthetically.

"'But now,'" continued Sam, "'now I find what a reg'lar soft-headed, inkred'lous turnip I must ha' been ; for there ain't nobody like you, though I like you better than nothin' at all.' I thought it best to make that rayther strong," said Sam, looking up.

Mr. Weller nodded approvingly, and Sam resumed.

"'So I take the privilidge of the day, Mary, my dear—as the gen'l'm'n in difficulties did, ven he valked out of a Sunday—to tell you that the first and only time I see you, your likeness was took on my hart in much quicker time and brighter colours than ever a likeness was took

“The great Art o’ Letter-writin’”

by the profeel macheen (wich p’raps you may have heerd on Mary my dear) altho it *does* finish a portrait and put the frame and glass on complete, with a hook at the end to hang it up by, and all in two minutes and a quarter.’”

“I am afeerd that werges on the poetical, Sammy,” said Mr. Weller dubiously.

“No, it don’t,” replied Sam, reading on very quickly, to avoid contesting the point—

“‘Except of me Mary my dear as your walentine and think over what I’ve said.—My dear Mary I will now conclude.’ That’s all,” said Sam.

“That’s rather a sudden pull-up, ain’t it, Sammy?” inquired Mr. Weller.

“Not a bit on it,” said Sam ; “she’ll vish there was more, and that’s the great art o’ letter-writin’.”

“Well,” said Mr. Weller, “there’s somethin’ in that ; and I wish your mother-in-law ’ud only conduct her conversation on the same gen-teel principle. Ain’t you a-goin’ to sign it?”

“That’s the difficulty,” said Sam ; “I don’t know what *to* sign it.”

“Sign it—‘Veller,’” said the oldest surviving proprietor of that name.

“Won’t do,” said Sam. “Never sign a walentine with your own name.”

“Sign it ‘Pickwick,’ then,” said Mr. Weller ; “it’s a very good name, and a easy one to spell.”

“The wery thing,” said Sam. “I *could* end with a werse ; what do you think?”

“I don’t like it, Sam,” rejoined Mr. Weller. “I never know’d a respectable coachman as wrote poetry, ’cept one, as made an affectin’ copy o’ worses the night afore he was hung for a highway robbery ; and *he* was only a Cambervell man, so even that’s no rule.”

Another Father's Views

But Sam was not to be dissuaded from the poetical idea that had occurred to him, so he signed the letter—

“Your love-sick
Pickwick.”

And having folded it, in a very intricate manner, squeezed a downhill direction in one corner: “To Mary, Housemaid, at Mr. Nupkins’s, Mayor’s, Ipswich, Suffolk”; and put it into his pocket, wafered, and ready for the general post.

CHARLES DICKENS

III. Gregory (in a letter to Nicobulus)

OF those who write epistles, (since you ask for my sentiments on this subject,) my opinion is, that some make their letters too lengthy, and others far too short for the occasion. Both these depart from the just mean, as archers miss the mark, whether they shoot beyond it, or come short of it. For the error is the same, though it is committed in opposite ways. The measure of letter-writing is the requirement of the subject matter. For we neither ought to be long where there is not much to say, nor brief where there is a press of matter. What then? Is it proper to measure wisdom by the Persian line, or by the cubits of children, and to write so uncompletely as to write, in fact, nothing; emulating the noontide shadows which lie immediately before us at our feet, the limits whereof are scarcely visible, and are rather glanced at than seen, and are, if I may so say, the shadows of shades? Whereas the right proceeding is to avoid the excess in either way, and to adopt a middle course. Concerning the concise method of writing this is my opinion.

The best Epistle

Concerning perspicuity this is plain, that we should avoid as much as possible the style of an essay, and aim rather at a familiar phraseology, and to say all in a few words.

That is the best epistle, and the most happily composed, which is calculated to bring its matter home both to the learned and to the unlearned,—to the one as being accommodated in language to the level of the multitude; and to the other, as being raised in thought above that level; that which is understood as soon as read. For it is equally incongruous that a riddle should be plain, and that an epistle should need interpretation.

The third requisite in letter-writing is grace of expression. For we must avoid a diction dry and harsh, and expressions that are coarse, inelegant, or dull; as where a letter is devoid of pointed sentences, adages, apophthegms, yes, and of jests too, and enigmatical allusions, by which this sort of composition is rendered more pleasing. But let us avoid excess in the use of these things. By the want of them we are dull and insipid; by the adoption of them we are in danger of being carried too far. We should use them to the same extent as purple is admitted into the texture of woven garments. We may introduce figures, too, but these should be few, and not immodest. But let us cast to the sophists antitheses, jingling words, and balanced sentences with similar terminations. Or if we do occasionally introduce them, let it be in a playful way, and not when we are treating of serious matters. I will end my observations on this subject by mentioning what I once heard from a man of wit about the eagle. When the birds were contending for the throne, and some came adorned in one way, some in another, it was his greatest ornament to appear before them unadorned. This also should

The Tongue and the Pen

be especially observed in epistles,—to be without the affectation of ornament, and to come as close as possible to nature. Thus far, in an epistle, I have sent you my sentiments concerning epistles. But a subject such as this, perhaps, is not the province of one who ought to be engaged in higher matters. What else belongs to the subject you may search for yourself with your quickness of apprehension; and those who are wise in these matters will assist your enquiries.

IV. James Howell

IT was a quaint difference the Ancients did put 'twixt a *Letter*, and an *Oration*; that the one should be attir'd like a Woman, the other like a Man: the latter of the two is allow'd large-side Robes, as long Periods, Parentheses, Similes, Examples, and other parts of Rhetorical flourishes: But a *Letter* or *Epistle* should be short-coated, and closely couch'd; a Hungerlin becomes a *Letter* more handsomly than a Gown. Indeed we should write as we speak; and that's a true familiar Letter which expresseth one's Mind, as if he were discoursing with the Party to whom he writes in succinct and short Terms. The *Tongue* and the *Pen* are both of them Interpreters of the Mind; but I hold the *Pen* to be the more faithful of the two: The *Tongue in udo posita*, being seated in a moist slippery place may fail and falter in her sudden extemporal Expressions; but the *Pen* having a greater advantage of premeditation, is not so subject to error, and leaves things behind it upon firm and authentic record.

Colloquial Eloquence

V. Sir James Mackintosh

WHEN a woman of feeling, fancy, and accomplishment has learned to converse with ease and grace, from long intercourse with the most polished society, and when she writes as she speaks, she must write letters as they ought to be written, if she has acquired just as much habitual correctness as is reconcilable with the air of negligence. A moment of enthusiasm, a burst of feeling, a flash of eloquence may be allowed, but the intercourse of society, either in conversation or in letters, allows no more. Though interdicted from the long continued use of elevated language, they are not without a resource. There is a part of language which is disdained by the pedant or the declaimer, and which both if they knew its difficulty would dread ; it is formed of the most familiar phrases and turns in daily use by the generality of men, and is full of energy and vivacity, bearing upon it the mark of those keen feelings and strong passions from which it springs. It is the employment of such phrases which produces what may be called colloquial eloquence. Conversation and letters may be thus raised to any degree of animation without departing from their character. Anything may be said, if it be spoken in the tone of society ; the highest guests are welcome, if they come in the easy undress of the club ; the strongest metaphor appears without violence, if it is familiarly expressed ; and we the more easily catch the warmest feeling, if we perceive that it is intentionally lowered in expression out of condescension to our calmer temper. It is thus that harangues and declamations, the last proof of bad taste and bad manners in conversation, are avoided, while the fancy and the heart find the means of pouring forth all their stores. To meet this despised

“So unlike Author-craft”

part of language in a polished dress, and producing all the effects of wit and eloquence, is a constant source of agreeable surprise. This is increased when a few bolder and higher words are happily wrought into the texture of this familiar eloquence. To find what seems so unlike author-craft in a book, raises the pleasing astonishment to the highest degree. . . . Letters must not be on a subject.

VI. Dr. Grimstone

“DON’T begin to write yet, any of you,” said the Doctor; “I have a few words to say to you first. In most cases, and as a general rule, I think it wisest to let every boy commit to paper whatever his feelings may dictate to him. I wish to claim no censorship over the style and diction of your letters. But there have been so many complaints lately from the parents of some of the less advanced of you, that I find myself obliged to make a change. Your father particularly, Richard Bultitude,” he added, turning suddenly upon the unlucky Paul, “has complained bitterly of the slovenly tone and phrasing of your correspondence; he said very justly that they would disgrace a stable-boy, and unless I could induce you to improve them, he begged he might not be annoyed by them in future.”

It was by no means the least galling part of Mr. Bultitude’s trials, that former forgotten words and deeds of his in his original condition were constantly turning up at critical seasons, and plunging him deeper into the morass just when he saw some prospect of gaining firm ground.

So on this occasion, he did remember that, being in a more than usually bad temper one day last year, he had, on receiving a sprawling, ill-spelt application from Dick

Jolland the Cynic

for more pocket money, to buy fireworks for the 5th of November, written to make some such complaint to the schoolmaster. He waited anxiously for the Doctor's next words; he might want to read the letters before they were sent off, in which case Paul would not be displeased, for it would be an easier and less dangerous way of putting the Doctor in possession of the facts.

But his complaints were to be honoured by a much more effectual remedy, for it naturally piqued the Doctor to be told that boys instructed under his auspices wrote like stable-boys. "However," he went on, "I wish your people at home to be assured from time to time of your welfare, and to prevent them from being shocked and distressed in future by the crudity of your communications, I have drawn up a short form of letter for the use of the lower boys in the second form—which I shall now proceed to dictate. Of course all boys in the first form, and all in the second above Bultitude and Jolland, will write as they please, as usual. Richard, I expect you to take particular pains to write this out neatly. Are you all ready? Very well, then . . . now"; and he read out the following letter, slowly—

"My dear Parents (or parent according to circumstances), comma" (all of which several took down most industriously)—"You will be rejoiced to hear that, having arrived with safety at our destination, we have by this time fully resumed our customary regular round of earnest work relieved and sweetened by hearty play." ("Have you all got 'hearty play' down?" inquired the Doctor rather suspiciously, while Jolland observed in an undertone that it would take some time to get *that* down.) "I hope, I trust I may say without undue conceit, to have made considerable progress in my school-tasks before I rejoin the family circle for the

The Pious Æneas

Easter vacation, as I think you will admit when I inform you of the programme we intend" ("D.V. in brackets and capital letters"—as before, this was taken down verbatim by Jolland, who probably knew very much better), "intend to work out during the term.

"In Latin, the class of which I am a member propose to thoroughly master the first book of Virgil's magnificent Epic, need I say I refer to the soul-moving story of the Pious Æneas?" (Jolland was understood by his near neighbours to remark that he thought the explanation distinctly advisable), "whilst, in Greek, we have already commenced the thrilling account of the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, that master of strategy! nor shall we, of course, neglect in either branch of study the syntax and construction of those two noble languages"—("noble languages!" echoed the writers mechanically, contriving to insinuate a touch of irony into the words).

"In German, under the able tutelage of Herr Stohwasser, who, as I may possibly have mentioned to you in casual conversation, is a graduate of the University of Heidelberg" ("and a silly old hass," added Jolland, parenthetically), "we have resigned ourselves to the spell of the Teutonian Shakespeare" (there was much difference of opinion as to the manner of spelling the "Teutonian Shakespeare") "as, in my opinion, Schiller may be not inaptly termed, and our French studies comprise such exercises, and short poems and tales, as are best calculated to afford an insight into the intricacies of the Gallic tongue.

"But I would not have you imagine, my dear parents (or parent, as before), that, because the claims of the intellect have been thus amply provided for, the requirements of the body are necessarily overlooked!

“Chevy”

“I have no intention of becoming a mere bookworm, and, on the contrary, we have had one excessively brisk and pleasant game at football already this season, and should, but for the unfortunate inclemency of the weather, have engaged again this afternoon in the mimic warfare

“In the playground our favourite diversion is the game of ‘chevy,’ so called from that engagement famed in ballad and history (I allude to the battle of Chevy Chase), and indeed, my dear parents, in the rapid alternations of its fortunes and the diversity of its incident, the game (to my mind) bears a striking resemblance to the accounts of that ever-memorable contest.

“I fear I must now relinquish my pen, as the time allotted for correspondence is fast waning to its close, and tea-time is approaching. Pray give my kindest remembrances to all my numerous friends and relatives, and accept my fondest love and affection for yourselves and the various other members of the family circle.

“I am, I am rejoiced to say, in the enjoyment of excellent health, and surrounded as I am by congenial companions, and employed in interesting and agreeable pursuits, it is superfluous to add that I am happy.

“And now, my dear parents, believe me, your dutiful and affectionate son, so and so.”

The Doctor finished his dictation with a roll in his voice, as much as to say, “I think that will strike your respective parents as a chaste and classical composition ! I think so !”

From *Vice Versâ* by F. ANSTEY

POSTSCRIPT II

THE EARLIEST LETTER

The Psalmist takes steps to remove an obstacle

[*Circa B.C. 1035*]

(David to Joab, sent by the hand of Uriah)

SET ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle
and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten,
and die.

POSTSCRIPT III

THE EARLIEST LETTER BY AN ENGLISH WOMAN. WITHOUT POSTSCRIPT

Lady Pelham informs Sir John Pelham of the siege of Pevensey Castle. The first letter extant by an English woman (spelling modernised)

[1399]

MY DEAR LORD,—I recommend me to your high lordship, with heart and body and all my poor might. And with all this I thank you as my dear Lord, dearest and best beloved of all earthly lords. I say for me, and thank you, my dear Lord, with all this that I said before of [for] your comfortable letter that you sent me from Pontefract, that came to me on Mary Magdalen's day: for by my troth I was never so glad as when I heard by your letter that ye were strong enough with the Grace of God for to keep you from the malice of your enemies. And, dear Lord, if it like to your high Lordship that as soon as ye might that I might hear of your gracious speed, which God Almighty continue and increase. And, my dear Lord, if it like you to know *my* fare, I am here laid by in a manner

The Siege

of a siege with the County of Sussex, Surrey, and a great parcel of Kent, so that I may not [go] out nor no victuals get me, but with much hazard. Wherefore, my dear, if it like you by the advice of your wise counsel for to set remedy of the salvation of your castle and withstand the malice of the shires aforesaid. And also that ye be fully informed of the great malice-workers in these shires which have so despitefully wrought to you, and to your castle, to your men and to your tenants ; for this country have they wasted for a great while.

Farewell, my dear Lord ! the Holy Trinity keep you from your enemies, and soon send me good tidings of you. Written at Pevensey, in the castle, on St. Jacob's day last past, by your own poor

J. PELHAM

To my true Lord.

POSTSCRIPT IV

THE BABOO AS LETTER-WRITER

I

MOST RESPECTED SIR,—I fall at your feet; if you please save my life and make me happy. I have the strongest desire to have the Biscyle to ride on. Through the contemplation, I have no sleep either in the day or in the night. I have been reduced to half, and if I continue the same course, I do not know what my fate will be. I have no money to buy it. Piety has never become fruitless, and so the generosity. Fame should remain after the man on the world, and this is the duty which man should do. I have been submitted myself to your honour, therefore your honour should do whatever your honour likes. Your honour should not think that you present me only a Biscyle worth of sum rupees, but my life which will perhaps serve your honour for your life. Now I have become like a helpless sick person and you have become a doctor. If you give me medicine I shall recover, otherwise not. Please be kind to me. God will be pleased with you which is necessary for a man to be happy. Let God excite tenderness in your honour's heart. Let

Various Desires

your great kind and noble mind order your generous hands to present this miserable man with your most beautiful "Biscyle."—Sir, I am your's obediently, etc.

II

HONOURABLE SIR,—Kindly excuse this poor thy servant from attending on your Honour's office this day, as I am suffering from the well-known disease commonly called ache of the interior economy, and I shall ever pray.—Yours ever painful,

RAM CHUNDER

P.S.—Oh, death, where is thy sting?

III

MOST EXALTED SIR,—It is with most habitually devout expressions of my sensitive respect that I approach the clemency of your masterful position with the self-dispraising utterance of my esteem and the also forgotten-by-myself assurance that in my own mind I shall be freed from the assumption that I am asking unpardonable donations if I assert that I desire a short respite from my exertions, as I am suffering from three boils, as per margin. I have the honourable delight of subscribing myself your exalted reverence's servitor,

JANJANBOL PANJAMJAUB

IV

MOST HONORD AND LITTERAL SIR,—I am poor man now taking trouble to write Your Honour. I am too much fond of mother tongue, *alias*

“ A damnable Miserable ”

English, and therefore being profoundly desirous to be master of this tongue, I am writing you. I am married man, my wife by the blessing of God has been too fruitful and thereby multiplying many sons and daughters, children causing severest distress to this poor petitioner's pockets in the pecuniary manner. But nevertheless I am strong minded and with energy and time will overthrow all the difficulties which do at present beset my matrimonial bed. As, Sir, I cannot afford to purchase your universal renowned paper must asking of your Honour a great and magnanimous favour to letting me have free paper in order to magnify my intellect and in time become perhaps a author of some book or books may be. I will then remember your kind Honour's great kindness and will ever circumsise myself to Your Honour your dutiful tutor and other things. I will write articles to your paper as payment can't give. I will make your Honour present of book when I write.

V

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH, — That your honour's servant is poor man in agricultural behaviour, and much depends on season for the staff of life, therefore he prays that you will favour upon him, and take him into your saintly service, that he may have some permanently labour for the support of his soul and his family ; wherefore he falls upon his family's bended-knees, and implores to you of this merciful consideration to a damnable miserable, like your honour's unfortunate petitioner. That your lordship's honour's servant was too much poorly during the last rains and was resuscitated by much medicines which made magnificent excavations in the coffers of your honourable servant,

Family Troubles

whose means are circumscribed by his large family, consisting of five female women, and three masculine, the last of which are still taking milk from mother's chest, and are damnably noisy through pulmonary catastrophe in their interior abdomen. Besides the above-named, an additional birth is, through grace of God, very shortly occurring to my beloved wife of bosom. . . . That your honour's damnable servant was officiating in several capacities during past generations, but has become too much old for espousing hard labour in this time of his bodily life ; but was not drunkard, nor fornicator, nor thief, nor swindler, nor any of these kind, but was always pious, affectionate to his numerous family consisting of the aforesaid five female women, and three males, the last of whom are still milking the parental mother. That your generous honour's lordship's servant was entreating to the Magistrate for employment in Municipality to remove filth, etc., but was not granted the petitioner. Therefore your generous lordship will give to me some easy work, in the — Department, or something of this sort. For which act of kindness your noble lordship's poor servant will, as in duty bound, pray for your longevity and procreativeness. I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant.

POSTSCRIPT V

EXAMPLES OF THE GENTLEST ART DRAWN FROM WORKS OF FICTION

I

Fanny Squeers describes Nicholas Nickleby's outrage

DOTHEBOYS HALL, *Thursday Morning*

SIR,—My pa requests me to write to you. The doctors considering it doubtful whether he will ever recuvver the use of his legs which prevents his holding a pen.

We are in a state of mind beyond everything, and my pa is one mask of brooses both blue and green likewise two forms are steeped in his Goar. We were kimpelled to have him carried down into the kitchen where he now lays. You will judge from this that he has been brought very low.

When your neveu that you recommended for a teacher had done this to my pa and jumped upon his body with his feet and also langwedge which I will not pollewt my pen with describing, he assaulted my ma with dreadful violence, dashed her to the earth, and drove her back comb several inches into her head. A very little more

Fanny's Postscript

and it must have entered her skull. We have a medical certifiket that if it had, the tortershell would have affected the brain.

Me and my brother were then the victims of his feury since which we have suffered very much which leads us to the arrowing belief that we received some injury in our insides, especially as no marks of violence are visible externally. I am screaming out loud all the time I write and so is my brother, which takes off my attention rather, and I hope will excuse mistakes.

The monster having sasiated his thirst for blood ran away, taking with him a boy of desperate caracter that he had excited to rebellyon, and a garnet ring belonging to my ma, and not having been apprehended by the constables is supposed to have been took up by some stage-coach. My pa begs that if he comes to you the ring may be returned, and that you will let the thief and assassin go, as if we prosecuted him he would only be transported, and if he is let go he is sure to be hung before long, which will save us trouble, and be much more satisfactory.—Hoping to hear from you when convenient, I remain, yours and cetrer,

FANNY SQUEERS

P.S.—I pity his ignorance and despise him.

II

Mr. Micawber's first letter to David Copperfield

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—The die is cast—
all is over. Hiding the ravages of care with a sickly mask of mirth, I have not informed you, this evening, that there is no hope of the remittance! Under these circumstances, alike humiliating to endure,

A last Communication

humiliating to contemplate, and humiliating to relate, I have discharged the pecuniary liability contracted at this establishment, by giving a note of hand, made payable fourteen days after date, at my residence, Pentonville, London. When it becomes due, it will not be taken up. The result is destruction. The bolt is impending, and the tree must fall.

Let the wretched man who now addresses you, my dear Copperfield, be a beacon to you through life. He writes with that intention, and in that hope. If he could think himself of so much use, one gleam of day might, by possibility, penetrate into the cheerless dungeon of his remaining existence — though his longevity is, at present (to say the least of it), extremely problematical.

This is the last communication, my dear Copperfield, you will ever receive from the beggared outcast,

WILKINS MICAWBER

III

Mr. Micawber has prospects

MY DEAR COPPERFIELD,—You may possibly not be unprepared to receive the intimation that something has turned up. I may have mentioned to you on a former occasion that I was in expectation of such an event.

I am about to establish myself in one of the provincial towns of our favoured island (where the society may be described as a happy admixture of the agricultural and the clerical), in immediate connection with one of the learned professions. Mrs. Micawber and our offspring will accompany me. Our ashes, at a future period,

A later Communication

will probably be found commingled in the cemetery attached to the venerable pile, for which the spot to which I refer has acquired a reputation, shall I say from China to Peru?

In bidding adieu to the modern Babylon, where we have undergone many vicissitudes, I trust not ignobly, Mrs. Micawber and myself cannot disguise from our minds that we part, it may be for years and it may be for ever, with an individual linked by strong associations to the altar of our domestic life. If, on the eve of such a departure, you will accompany our mutual friend, Mr. Thomas Traddles, to our present abode, and there reciprocate the wishes natural to the occasion, you will confer a Boon on one who is ever yours,

WILKINS MICAWBER

IV

Mrs. Micawber expresses her fears and hopes

MY best regards to Mr. Thomas Traddles, and if he should still remember one who formerly had the happiness of being well acquainted with him, may I beg a few moments of his leisure time? I assure Mr. T. T. that I would not intrude upon his kindness, were I in any other position than on the confines of distraction.

Though harrowing to myself to mention, the alienation of Mr. Micawber (formerly so domesticated) from his wife and family, is the cause of my addressing my unhappy appeal to Mr. Traddles, and soliciting his best indulgence. Mr. T. can form no adequate idea of the change in Mr. Micawber's conduct, of his wildness, of his violence. It has gradually augmented, until it assumes the appearance of aberration of intellect.

Mr. Micawber's Paroxysms

Scarcely a day passes, I assure Mr. Traddles, on which some paroxysm does not take place. Mr. T. will not require me to depict my feelings, when I inform him that I have become accustomed to hear Mr. Micawber assert that he has sold himself to the D. Mystery and secrecy have long been his principal characteristic, have long replaced unlimited confidence. The slightest provocation, even being asked if there is anything he would prefer for dinner, causes him to express a wish for a separation. Last night, on being childishly solicited for twopence, to buy "lemon-stunners"—a local sweetmeat—he presented an oyster-knife at the twins!

I entreat Mr. Traddles to bear with me in entering into these details. Without them, Mr. T. would indeed find it difficult to form the faintest conception of my heart-rending situation.

May I now venture to confide to Mr. T. the purport of my letter? Will he now allow me to throw myself on his friendly consideration? Oh yes, for I know his heart!

The quick eye of affection is not easily blinded, when of the female sex. Mr. Micawber is going to London. Though he studiously concealed his hand, this morning before breakfast, in writing the direction-card which he attached to the little brown valise of happier days, the eagle-glance of matrimonial anxiety detected d,o,n, distinctly traced. The West-end destination of the coach is the Golden Cross. Dare I fervently implore Mr. T. to see my misguided husband, and to reason with him? Dare I ask Mr. T. to endeavour to step in between Mr. Micawber and his agonised family? Oh no, for that would be too much!

If Mr. Copperfield should yet remember one un-

Re-sealing of the Doom

known to fame, will Mr. T. take charge of my unalterable regards and similar entreaties? In any case, he will have the benevolence *to consider this communication strictly private, and on no account whatever to be alluded to, however distantly, in the presence of Mr. Micawber.* If Mr. T. should ever reply to it (which I cannot but feel to be *most* improbable), a letter addressed to M. E., Post Office, Canterbury, will be fraught with less painful consequences than any addressed immediately to one, who subscribes herself, in extreme distress, Mr. Thomas Traddles's respectful friend and suppliant,

EMMA MICAWBER

V

Mr. Micawber at the two extremes

CANTERBURY, *Friday*

MY DEAR MADAM, AND COPPERFIELD,—
The fair land of promise lately looming on the horizon is again enveloped in impenetrable mists, and for ever withdrawn from the eyes of a drifting wretch whose Doom is sealed!

Another writ has been issued (in His Majesty's High Court of King's Bench at Westminster), in another cause of *HEEP v. MICAWBER*, and the defendant in that cause is the prey of the sheriff having legal jurisdiction in this bailiwick.

“Now's the day, and now's the hour,
See the front of battle lour,
See approach proud EDWARD'S power—
Chains and slavery!”

Consigned to which, and to a speedy end (for mental torture is not supportable beyond a certain point, and

“The height of earthly Bliss”

that point I feel I have attained), my course is run. Bless you, bless you! Some future traveller, visiting, from motives of curiosity, not unmingled, let us hope, with sympathy, the place of confinement allotted to debtors in this city, may, and I trust will, ponder, as he traces on its walls, inscribed with a rusty nail, the obscure initials,

W. M.

P.S.—I re-open this to say that our common friend, Mr. Thomas Traddles (who has not yet left us, and is looking extremely well), has paid the debt and costs, in the noble name of Miss Trotwood; and that myself and family are at the height of earthly bliss.

VI

Little George Osborne gives his mother the news of the great fight at Dr. Swishtail's

SUGARCANE HOUSE, RICHMOND, *March 18*—

DEAR MAMA,—I hope you are quite well. I should be much obliged to you to send me a cake and five shillings. There has been a fight here between Cuff & Dobbin. Cuff, you know, was the Cock of the School. They fought thirteen rounds, and Dobbin Licked. So Cuff is now Only Second Cock. The fight was about me. Cuff was licking me for breaking a bottle of milk, and Figs wouldn't stand it. We call him Figs because his father is a grocer—Figs and Rudge, Thames St., City—I think as he fought for me you ought to buy your Tea and Sugar at his father's. Cuff goes home every Saturday, but can't this, because he has 2 Black eyes. He has a white pony to come and fetch him, and a groom in livery on a

From *Pride and Prejudice*

bay mare. I wish my papa would let me have a pony,
and I am, your dutiful Son,

GEORGE SEDLEY OSBORNE

P.S.—Give my love to little Emmy. I am cutting her
out a Coach in cardboard. Please not a seed-cake, but a
plum-cake.

VII

Mr. Bennet prepares the family for Mr. Collins's
first letter

"I HOPE, my dear," said Mr. Bennet to his wife, as
they were at breakfast the next morning, "that
you have ordered a good dinner to-day, because I have
reason to expect an addition to our family party."

"Who do you mean, my dear? I know of nobody
that is coming I am sure unless Charlotte Lucas should
happen to call in—and I hope *my* dinners are good
enough for *her*."

"I do not believe she often sees such at home. The
person of whom I speak is a gentleman and a stranger."

Mrs. Bennet's eyes sparkled.

"A gentleman and a stranger? It is Mr. Bingley,
I am sure. Why, Jane, you never dropt a word of this,
you sly thing! Well, I am sure I shall be extremely
glad to see Mr. Bingley. But, good Lord, how un-
lucky, there is not a bit of fish to be got to-day.
Lydia, my love, ring the bell; I must speak to Hill this
moment."

"It is *not* Mr. Bingley," said her husband; "it is a
person whom I never saw in the whole course of my
life."

This roused a general astonishment; and he had the

Mrs. Bennet and the Entail

pleasure of being eagerly questioned by his wife and five daughters at once.

After amusing himself some time with their curiosity, he thus explained—"About a month ago I received this letter ; and about a fortnight ago I answered it, for I thought it a case of some delicacy, and requiring early attention. It is from my cousin, Mr. Collins, who, when I am dead, may turn you all out of this house as soon as he pleases."

"Oh ! my dear," cried his wife, "I cannot bear to hear that mentioned. Pray do not talk of that odious man. I do think it is the hardest thing in the world, that your estate should be entailed away from your own children ; and I am sure, if I had been you, I should have tried to do something or other about it."

Jane and Elizabeth attempted to explain to her the nature of an entail. They had often attempted it before, but it was a subject on which Mrs. Bennet was beyond the reach of reason, and she continued to rail bitterly against the cruelty of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters, in favour of a man whom nobody cared anything about.

"It certainly is a most iniquitous affair," said Mr. Bennet, "and nothing can clear Mr. Collins from the guilt of inheriting Longbourn. But if you will listen to his letter you may perhaps be a little softened by his manner of expressing himself."

"No, that I am sure I shall not ; and I think it was very impertinent of him to write to you at all, and very hypocritical. I hate such false friends. Why could not he keep on quarrelling with you, as his father did before him ?"

"Why, indeed, he does seem to have had some filial scruples on that head, as you will hear.

Mr. Collins's Letter

" HUNSFORD, NEAR WESTERHAM, KENT

October 15

"**D**EAR SIR,—The disagreement subsisting between yourself and my late honoured father always gave me much uneasiness, and since I have had the misfortune to lose him, I have frequently wished to heal the breach ; but for some time I was kept back by my own doubts, fearing lest it might seem disrespectful to his memory for me to be on good terms with any one with whom it had always pleased him to be at variance.' —“There Mrs. Bennet.”—‘My mind, however, is now made up on the subject, for having received ordination at Easter, I have been so fortunate as to be distinguished by the patronage of the Right Hon. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, whose bounty and beneficence has preferred me to the valuable rectory of this parish, where it shall be my earnest endeavour to demean myself with grateful respect towards her Ladyship, and be ever ready to perform those rites and ceremonies which are instituted by the Church of England. As a clergyman, moreover, I feel it my duty to promote and establish the blessing of peace in all families within the reach of my influence ; and on these grounds I flatter myself that my present overtures of goodwill are highly commendable, and that the circumstance of my being next in the entail of Longbourn estate will be kindly overlooked on your side, and not lead you to reject the offered olive-branch.

“I cannot be otherwise than concerned at being the means of injuring your amiable daughters, and beg leave to apologise for it, as well as to assure you of my readiness to make them every possible amends—but of this hereafter. If you should have no objections to receive me into your house, I propose myself the satisfaction of waiting on you and your family, Monday, Nov. 18th,

Mr. Bennet has great Hopes

by four o'clock, and shall probably trespass on your hospitality till the Saturday se'nnight following, which I can do without any inconvenience, as Lady Catherine is far from objecting to my occasional absence on a Sunday, provided that some other clergyman is engaged to do the duty of the day.—I remain, dear Sir, with respectful compliments to your lady and daughters, your well-wisher and friend,

WILLIAM COLLINS'

"At four o'clock, therefore, we may expect this peace-making gentleman," said Mr. Bennet, as he folded up the letter. "He seems to be a most conscientious and polite young man, upon my word, and I doubt not will prove a valuable acquaintance, especially if Lady Catherine should be so indulgent as to let him come to us again. There is some sense in what he says about the girls, however, and if he is disposed to make them any amends, I shall not be the person to discourage him."

"Though it is difficult," said Jane, "to guess in what way he can mean to make us the atonement he thinks our due, the wish is certainly to his credit."

Elizabeth was chiefly struck with his extraordinary deference for Lady Catherine, and his kind intention of christening, marrying, and burying his parishioners whenever it was required. "He must be an oddity, I think," said she. "I cannot make him out. There is something very pompous in his style,—and what can he mean by apologising for being next in the entail? We cannot suppose he would help it if he could. Can he be a sensible man, Sir?"

"No, my dear ; I think not. I have great hopes of finding him quite the reverse. There is a mixture of servility and self-importance in his letter, which promises well. I am impatient to see him."

Mr. Collins writes again

“In point of composition,” said Mary, “his letter does not seem defective. The idea of the olive-branch perhaps is not wholly new, yet I think it is well expressed.”

VIII

Mr. Collins urges Mr. Bennet to play the father

MY DEAR SIR,—I feel myself called upon, by our relationship, and my situation in life, to condole with you on the grievous affliction you are now suffering under, of which we were yesterday informed by a letter from Hertfordshire. Be assured, my dear sir, that Mrs. Collins and myself sincerely sympathise with you and all your respectable family, in your present distress, which must be of the bitterest kind, because proceeding from a cause which no time can remove. No arguments shall be wanting on my part that can alleviate so severe a misfortune—or that may comfort you, under a circumstance that must be of all others most afflicting to a parent’s mind.

The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison of this.

And it is the more to be lamented, because there is reason to suppose, as my dear Charlotte informs me, that this licentiousness of behaviour in your daughter has proceeded from a faulty degree of indulgence; though, at the same time, for the consolation of yourself and Mrs. Bennet, I am inclined to think that her own disposition must be naturally bad, or she could not be guilty of such an enormity, at so early an age.

Howsoever that may be, you are grievously to be pitied; in which opinion I am not only joined by Mrs.

Lady Catherine's Feelings

Collins, but likewise by Lady Catherine and her daughter, to whom I have related the affair.

They agree with me in apprehending that this false step in one daughter will be injurious to the fortunes of all the others ; for who, as Lady Catherine herself condescendingly says, will connect themselves with such a family? And this consideration leads me moreover to reflect with augmented satisfaction, on a certain event of last November ; for had it been otherwise, I must have been involved in all your sorrow and disgrace.

Let me advise you then, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offence.—I am, dear Sir, etc.

IX

Mr. Bennet dismisses Mr. Collins

DEAR SIR,—I must trouble you once more for congratulations. Elizabeth will soon be the wife of Mr. Darcy. Console Lady Catherine as well as you can. But, if I were you, I would stand by the nephew ; he has more to give.—Yours sincerely, etc.

X

Mr. Weller, senior, becomes the happy Bear of ill news

MARKIS GRANBY, DORKEN, *Wednesday*

MY DEAR SAMMLE,—I am verry sorry to have the pleasure of being a Bear of ill news your Mother in law cort cold consekens of imprudently settin too long

“She paid the last Pike”

on the damp grass in the rain a hearin of a shepherd who warnt able to leave off till late at night owen to his havin vound his-self up vith brandy and vater and not being able to stop his-self till he got a little sober which took a many hours to do the doctor says that if she'd svallo'd varm brandy and vater arterwards insted of afore she mightn't have been no vus her veels wos immedety greased and everythink done to set her agoin as could be inwented your farther had hopes as she vould have vorked round as usual but just as she wos a turnen the corner my boy she took the wrong road and vent down hill vith a welocity you never see and notwithstanding that the drag wos put on directly by the medikel man it wort of no use at all for she paid the last pike at twenty minutes afore six o'clock yesterday evenin havin done the jouney wery much under the reglar time vich praps was partly owen to her haven taken in wery little luggage by the vay your father says that if you vill come and see me Sammy he vill take it as a wery great favor for I am wery lonely Samivel n b he *vill* have it spelt that vay vich I say ant right and as there is sich a many things to settle he is sure your guvner won't object of course he vill not Sammy for I knows him better so he sends his dooty in which I join and am Samivel infernally yours,

TONY VELLER

POSTSCRIPT VI

A MODEL

Mr. Rogers to Lady Dufferin

WILL you dine with me on Wednesday?

Lady Dufferin to Mr. Rogers

WON'T I?

THE SECOND POST

<i>First Published</i>	. . . . .	<i>October 20th 1910</i>
<i>Second Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>December 1910</i>
<i>Third Edition</i>	. . . . .	<i>October 1911</i>
<i>Fourth Edition</i>	<i>October 1913</i>
<i>Fifth Edition</i>	<i>November 1918</i>
<i>Sixth Edition</i>	<i>August 1919</i>

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I

FROM AGE TO YOUTH

The Rev. Sydney Smith sends a message to a little
visitor ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

FOSTON, 1823

DEAR LITTLE GEE,—Many thanks for your kind and affectionate letter. I cannot recollect what you mean by our kindness ; all that I remember is, that you came to see us, and we all thought you very pleasant, good-hearted, and strongly infected with Lancastrian tones and pronunciations. God bless you, dear child ! I shall always be very fond of you till you grow tall, and speak without an accent, and marry some extremely disagreeable person.—Ever very affectionately yours,

SYDNEY SMITH

Landor and his son exchange missives ♪ ♪

I

MY DEAREST PAPA,—I hope you are well. We have all had bad colds. But thank God we are now quite well again. Walter, Charles, and Julia send

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you a thousand kisses. And I send you ten thousand, and I wish you to come back again with all my heart. And believe me, my dearest papa, your affectionate son,

A. S. LANDOR

II

MY DEAREST ARNOLD,—I received your letter to-day much too late to answer it by the post ; but you will see that I was thinking of you and of Julia yesterday by the verses I send you on the other side. I am very much pleased to observe that you write better than I do ; and, if you continue to read the Greek nouns, you will very soon know more Greek [than I], unless I begin again to study it every day. When I was a little boy I did not let any one get before me ; and you seem as if you would do the same. I promised you a Greek book, but I will give you two if you go on well, and next year two others, very beautiful and entertaining. I shall never be quite happy until I see you again and put my cheek upon your head. Tell my sweet Julia that, if I see twenty little girls, I will not romp with any of them before I romp with her ; and kiss your two dear brothers for me. You must always love them as much as I love you, and you must teach them how to be good boys, which I cannot do so well as you can. God preserve and bless you, my own Arnold. My heart beats as if it would fly to you, my own fierce creature. We shall very soon meet.

Love your

BABBO

The Rev. Sydney Smith offers counsel to Lucy 

LONDON, *July 22, 1835*

LUCY, Lucy, my dear child, don't tear your frock : tearing frocks is not of itself a proof of genius ; but write as your mother writes, act as your mother acts ; be




From Age to Youth

frank, loyal, affectionate, simple, honest ; and then integrity or laceration of frock is of little import.

And Lucy, dear child, mind your arithmetic. You know, in the first sum of yours I ever saw, there was a mistake. You had carried two (as a cab is licensed to do) and you ought, dear Lucy, to have carried but one. Is this a trifle ? What would life be without arithmetic, but a scene of horrors ?

You are going to Boulogne, the city of debts, peopled by men who never understood arithmetic ; by the time you return, I shall probably have received my first paralytic stroke, and shall have lost all recollection of you ; therefore I now give you my parting advice. Don't marry anybody who has not a tolerable understanding and a thousand a year ; and God bless you, dear child !

SYDNEY SMITH

Charles Dickens assures a young admirer of *Nicholas Nickleby* that all shall go well   

(To Master Hastings Hughes)

DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON

December 12, 1838

RESPECTED SIR,—I have given Squeers one cut on the neck and two on the head, at which he appeared much surprised and began to cry, which, being a cowardly thing, is just what I should have expected from him—wouldn't you ?

I have carefully done what you told me in your letter about the lamb and the two "sheeps" for the little boys. They have also had some good ale and porter, and some wine. I am sorry you didn't say *what* wine you would

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like them to have. I gave them some sherry which they liked very much, except one boy, who was a little sick and choked a good deal. He was rather greedy, and that's the truth, and I believe it went the wrong way, which I say served him right, and I hope you will say so too.

Nicholas had his roast lamb, as you said he was to, but he could not eat it all, and says if you do not mind his doing so he should like to have the rest hashed to-morrow with some greens, which he is very fond of, and so am I. He said he did not like to have his porter hot, for he thought it spoilt the flavour, so I let him have it cold. You should have seen him drink it. I thought he never would have left off. I also gave him three pounds of money, all in sixpences, to make it seem more, and he said directly that he should give more than half to his mamma and sister, and divide the rest with poor SMIKE. And I say he is a good fellow for saying so; and if anybody says he isn't I am ready to fight him whenever they like—there!

Fanny Squeers shall be attended to, depend upon it. Your drawing of her is very like, except that I don't think the hair is quite curly enough. The nose is particularly like hers, and so are the legs. She is a nasty disagreeable thing, and I know it will make her very cross when she sees it; and what I say is that I hope it may. You will say the same, I know—at least I think you will.

I meant to have written you a long letter, but I cannot write very fast when I like the person I am writing to, because that makes me think about them, and I like you, and so I tell you. Besides, it is just eight o'clock at night, and I always go to bed at eight o'clock except when it is my birthday, and then I sit up to supper. So I will not say anything more beside this — and that is

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my love to you and Neptune ; and if you will drink my health every Christmas Day I will drink yours—come. —I am, Respected Sir, your affectionate Friend,

CHARLES DICKENS

P.S.—I don't write my name very plain, but you know what it is, you know, so never mind.

Charles Dickens is forced to disappoint Miss Mary Talfourd ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE, *December* 16, 1841

MY DEAR MARY,—I should be delighted to come and dine with you on your birthday, and to be as merry as I wish you to be always ; but as I am going, within a very few days afterwards, a very long distance from home, and I shall not see any of my children for six long months, I have made up my mind to pass all that week at home for their sakes ; just as you would like your papa and mamma to spend all the time they possibly could spare with you if they were about to make a dreary voyage to America ; which is what I am going to do myself.


But although I cannot come to see you on that day, you may be sure that I shall not forget that it is your birthday, and that I shall drink your health and many happy returns, in a glass of wine, filled as full as it will hold. And I shall dine at half-past five myself, so that we may both be drinking our wine at the same time ; and I shall tell my Mary (for I have got a daughter of that name, but she is a very small one as yet) to drink your health too ; and we shall try and make believe that you are here, or that we are in Russell Square, which is

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the best thing we can do, I think, under the circumstances.

You are growing up so fast that by the time I come home again I expect you will be almost a woman; and in a very few years we shall be saying to each other: "Don't you remember what the birthdays used to be in Russell Square?" and "How strange it seems!" and "How quickly time passes!" and all that sort of thing, you know. But I shall always be very glad to be asked on your birthday, and to come if you will let me, and to send my love to you, and to wish that you may live to be very old and very happy, which I do now with all my heart.—Believe me always, my dear Mary, yours affectionately,

CHARLES DICKENS




Bishop Walsham How expresses his disappointment
to the children of the Rev. Daniel Tyssen 

BUTTERED TOAST

THERE was a Bishop, old and grey,
Who came to Brighton one fine day,
And it chanced at the time there were living there
Three little maidens bright and fair,
And they were as merry as merry could be,
And the Bishop he loved them, one, two, three.
Now the Bishop he craftily planned to arrive
At the door of the house as the clock struck five,
For once on a time he had called at the door
At the very same hour two years before:
The master and mistress were out, you see,
And the children were having their nursery tea;

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So he mounted, unbidden, the topmost stair,
And asked to partake of the children's fare ;
And no words are potent enough to reveal
The exquisite bliss of that nursery meal !
The sweet little maidens were full of fun,
And the Bishop he loved them, three, two, **one** ;
But that which enchanted his Lordship most
Was the hot, brown, well-buttered nursery toast !
Alas ! for the words that now smote on his ear,—
“Not at home,” not even the children dear !
So sadly he turned away from the door,
And he sighed to think that his dream was o'er ;
And, as memories sweet of the past arose,
He brushed a tear from the end of his nose,
For he'd failed in his longing once more to see
Those sweet little maidens, one, two, three.
Yet the one soft vision that touched him most
Was the thought of that nursery buttered toast !

R. L. S. transfers his birthday rights   

[The following letter was written to the American Land Commissioner (later Chief Justice for a term) in Samoa, whose younger daughter, then at home in the States, had been born on a Christmas Day, and consequently regarded herself as defrauded of her natural rights to a private anniversary of her own.—SIDNEY COLVIN.]

VAILIMA, *June* 19, 1891

DEAR MR. IDE,—Herewith please find the DOCUMENT, which I trust will prove sufficient in law. It seems to me very attractive in its eclecticism ; Scots, English, and Roman law phrases are all indifferently introduced, and a quotation from the works of Haynes

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Bayly can hardly fail to attract the indulgence of the Bench.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

I, Robert Louis Stevenson, Advocate of the Scots Bar, author of *The Master of Ballantrae* and *Moral Emblems*, stuck civil engineer, sole owner and patentee of the Palace and Plantation known as Vailima in the island of Upolu, Samoa, a British subject, being in sound mind, and pretty well, I thank you, in body :

In consideration that Miss Annie H. Ide, daughter of H. C. Ide, the town of Saint Johnsbury, in the county of Caledonia, in the state of Vermont, United States of America, was born, out of all reason, upon Christmas Day, and is therefore out of all justice denied the consolation and profit of a proper birthday ;

And considering that I, the said Robert Louis Stevenson, have attained an age when O, we never mention it, and that I have now no further use for a birthday of any description ;

And in consideration that I have met H. C. Ide, the father of the said Annie H. Ide, and found him about as white a land commissioner as I require :

Have transferred, and do hereby transfer, to the said Annie H. Ide, all and whole my rights and privileges in the thirteenth day of November, formerly my birthday, now, hereby, and henceforth, the birthday of the said Annie H. Ide, to have, hold, exercise, and enjoy the same in the customary manner, by the sporting of fine raiment, eating of rich meats, and receipt of gifts, compliments, and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors ;

And I direct the said Annie H. Ide to add to the said name of Annie H. Ide the name Louisa—at least in

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private ; and I charge her to use my said birthday with moderation and humanity, *et tamquam bona filia familiae*, the said birthday not being so young as it once was, and having carried me in a very satisfactory manner since I can remember ;

And in case the said Annie H. Ide shall neglect or contravene either of the above conditions, I hereby revoke the donation and transfer my rights in the said birthday to the President of the United States of America for the time being ;

In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal this nineteenth day of June in the year of grace eighteen hundred and ninety-one.



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Witness, Lloyd Osbourne

Witness, Harold Watts

R. L. S. sets up a memory ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪




NEW JERSEY, *May 27*, 1888

DEAR HOMER ST. GAUDENS,—Your father has brought you this day to see me, and he tells me it is his hope you may remember the occasion. I am going to do what I can to carry out his wish ; and it may amuse you, years after, to see this little scrap of paper and to read what I write. I must begin by testifying that you yourself took no interest whatever in the introduction, and in the most proper spirit displayed a single-minded ambition to get back to play, and this

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I thought an excellent and admirable point in your character. You were also (I use the past tense, with a view to the time when you shall read, rather than to that when I am writing) a very pretty boy, and (to my European views) startlingly self-possessed. My time of observation was so limited that you must pardon me if I can say no more: what else I marked, what restlessness of foot and hand, what graceful clumsiness, what experimental designs upon the furniture, was but the common inheritance of human youth. But you may perhaps like to know that the lean flushed man in bed, who interested you so little, was in a state of mind extremely mingled and unpleasant: harassed with work which he thought he was not doing well, troubled with difficulties to which you will in time succeed, and yet looking forward to no less a matter than a voyage to the South Seas and the visitation of savage and desert islands.—Your father's friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

William Thomas, Clerk of the Council, tenders to Edward the Sixth a few questions the answers to which are useful to monarchs   

TO THE KINGS HIGHNES,—Pleaseth your excellent Mat^{ie} albeit that my grosse knowledge be utterly unapte to entreprise th' Instruction of any thinge unto your Highnes, whose erudicion I knowe to be suche as everie faithfull hert ought to rejoyse at: yet imagining with myself that hitherto your Majestie hath more applied the studie of the tonges than any matter either of Historie or of Policie, (the Holie Scriptures excepted), and considering that (syns your Highnes is by

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the providence of God alreadie growen to the admynis-
tracion of that great and famous chardge that hath been
flete unto yow by your most noble Progenitors) there is
no earthlie thinge more necessarie than the knowledge
of such examples as in this and other regiments hereto-
fore have happened : one thought of my bounden dutie
I coulde no lesse do than present unto your Ma^{tie} the
Notes of those Discourses that nowe my principall studie,
which I have gathered out of divers aucthors, entending
with layssor to write the circumstances of those reasons
that I can finde to make most for the purpose. And
bicause there is nothing better learned than that which
man laboureth for himself, therefore I determined at this
present to give unto your Highnes this little Abstracte
only. Trusting that liek as in all kinde of vertuouse
Learning and Exercise ye have alwaies shewed yourself
most diligent, even so in this parte which concerneth the
chief mayntenance of your high astate, and preservacion
of your Common Wealthe, your Majestie woll shewe no
lesse industrie than the matter deserveth. For, though
these be but Questions : yet there is not so small a one
emongest them as woll not nrynister matter of much
discourse worthie the argument and debating ; which
your Highnes may either for passetyme or in earnest
propone to the wisest men. And whan so ever there
shall appeare any difficultie that your Majestie wolde
have discussed, if it shall stande with your pleasour
I shall most gladly write the circumstance of the best
discourses that I can gather tooching that parte, and
accordingly present it unto your Highnes : most humbly
beseching the same to accepte my good will in as good
parte as if I were of habilitie to offer unto yo^r Ma^{tie} a
more worthy thinge —Yo^r Ma^{ts} most humble servaunt,

WILLIAM THOMAS

The Second Post

1. Whereof hath growen th' auctoritie of Astates, and howe many kindes of Astates there be?
2. Which of all Astates is most commendable and necessarie?
3. Wheather a moltitude without heade may prosper?
4. Wheather is wiser and more constant, the Moltitude or the Prince?
5. Wheather is better for the Commonwealthe that the power be in the Nobilitie or in the people?
6. Wheather a meane Astate may beare a great subject?
7. What Lawes arr necessarie, and howe they ought to be mainteigned?
8. Howe easilie a weak Prince with good ordre may longe be mainteigned, and howe sone a mightie Prince with little disordre may be destroyed?
9. What causeth an inheritor King to loose his Realme?
10. Wheather Religion, besids the honor of God, be not also the gretest staie of Civile ordre? and wheather the Unitie thereof ought not to be preserved with the swearde and rigor?
11. Wheather of the twoo is the more unkinde, the People or the Prince?
12. Howe unkindenesse may be eschewed?
13. What is th' occasion of Conspiracies?
14. Wheather the People commonly desire the destruction of him that is in auctoritie, and what moveth them so to do?
15. What a man of auctoritie may do in the Moltitude?
16. What is to be observed in chooseng of Officers?
17. Howe flatterers arr to be knowen and despised?
18. Howe mennes opinions in great matters are to be pondered?

From Age to Youth

19. Wheather in Judgements the meane waie ought to be observed?

20. Wheather a man of auctoritie ought to contempne his inferiors?

21. Howe dangerouse is it to leape from Humilitie unto Pride, and from Pride to Creweltie?

22. Wheather men may easelie be corrupted?

23. Howe much good mynisters ought to be rewarded and the evill punished?

24. Howe daungerouse it is be auctor of a newe matter?

25. Wheather accusations arr necessarie, and wheather yll reaportes arr condempnable?

26. Wheather yll Reaporte lighteth not most commonly on the Reaporter?

27. Wheather ambitious men, mounting from one ambicion to an other, do first seeke not to be offended and afterwards to offende?

28. Wheather it be daungerouse to make him an Officer that ones hath been misused?

29. Wheather they be not often deceived that thinke with humilitie to overcome Pride?

30. What force the Prince's example hath emongest the Subjectes?

31. Howe a Prince ought to governe himself to attaigne reputacion?

32. What thinges deserve either praise or reproache?

33. What is Liberalitie and Miserie?

34. What is Creweltie and Clemencie?

35. Wheather Hate and Dispraise ought to be eschewed?

36. What is Fortune?

37. Howe men be oftentimes blinded with fortune?

38. Wheather it be not necessarie for him that

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woll have contynuall good fortune, to varie with the tyme?

39. What Prince's amytie is good?

40. Wheather a puissant Prince ought to purchase amitie with money? or with vertue and stowtenes?

41. What trust ought to be had in Leages?

42. What is the cause of Warre?

43. Howe many kindes of Warre there be?

44. Howe many kindes of Souldeors?

45. Wheather they that fight for their owne glorie arr good and faithfull souldeors?

46. Why do men overreune straunge countreys?

47. Howe shulde a Prince measure his force, and howe rule himself in warre?

48. Wheather a manifest warre towards, ought to be begoune upon th' ennemye, or abidden till th' ennemye beginne?

49. Wheather is it better to assaulte or to defende?

50. Wheather money be the substaunce of warre or not?

51. Wheather weake Astates arr ever doubtfull in determyneng, and wheather much deliberacion doth rather hurte than helpe?

52. Wheather is greater in Conquest, vertue or fortune?

53. Wheather prevaileth more in fortune, Policie or Force?

54. What is Policie in warre?

55. Wheather Conquests arr not sometime more noysome than profitable?

56. Wheather it be wisdom to adventure much?

57. What meanes ought to be used in defence?

58. Wheather the Countrey ought not alwaies to be defended, the quarell being right or wronge?

59. Wheather inconveniences ought rather to be quali-

From Age to Youth

fied and overcome with layssour, or at the first plainly repressed?

60. What daungur is it to a Prince not to be avenged of an open Injurie?

61. What discommoditie is it to a Prince to lacke Armure?

62. Howe much ought Artillerie to be esteemed?

63. Wheather ought more to be esteemed, Footemen or Horsemen?

64. Wheather it be not daungerouse to be served of straunge souldours?

65. Wheather is an Armie better governed of one absolute head, or of divers?

66. What ought the Generall of an Armie to be?

67. Wheather is more to be esteemed a good Captaine with a weake Armye, or a stronge Armye with a weak Captaine?

68. Wheather it be necessarie that generall Captaines have large commissions?

69. What advantage is it to foresee the enemyes purpose?

70. Wheather a Captaine in the felde may forsake the feight if his ennemye woll nedes feight?

71. What it is to be quick of Invention in the time of battaill?

72. What sufferance and tyme is in Feight?

73. Wheather it be necessarie to assure th' armie before the feight?

74. Wheather it be not necessarie sometime to feigne folie?

75. Howe to beware of crafte, when th' ennemie seemeth to have committed a folie?

76. What advauntage it is for a Captaine to knowe his groundes?

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77. Wheather Skyrmisshes be good?

78. Wheather Fortresses arr not many times more noysome than proffitable?

79. Wheather an excellent man doth alter his cowraige for any adversitie?

80. Wheather Prince ought to be contented with resonable victories? and so to leave?.

81. Wheather Furie and Braverie be many times necessarie to obteigne purposes?

82. Wheather promises made by force ought to be observed?

83. Wheather it becommeth not a Prince to pretende liberalitie when necessitie constreigneth him to depart with thinges.

84. What is vertue, and when is it most esteemed?

85. What destroieth the memorie of things?

It becometh a Prince for his wisdom to be had in admiracion as well of his chiefest Counsaillors as of his other subjects; and syns nothing serveth more to that than to kepe the principall things of wisdom secrete till occasion require the utterance, I wolde wishe them to be kept secret; referring it neverthelesse to your Majesties good will and pleasor

II

THE TRAVELLERS

Shelley describes his life at Leghorn ∞ ∞ ∞

LIVORNO, *August* (22?) 1819

MY DEAR PEACOCK,—I ought first to say that I have not yet received one of your letters from Naples; in Italy such things are difficult, but your present letter tells me all that I could desire to hear of your situation.

My employments are these: I awaken usually at seven; read half an hour; then get up; breakfast; after breakfast ascend *my tower*, and read or write until two. Then we dine. After dinner I read Dante with Mary, gossip a little, eat grapes and figs, sometimes walk, though seldom, and at half-past five pay a visit to Mrs. Gisborne, who reads Spanish with me until near seven. We then come for Mary, and stroll about till supper time. Mrs. Gisborne is a sufficiently amiable and very accomplished woman; she is δημοκρατικη and αθη—how far she may be φιλανθρωπη I don't know, for she is the antipodes of enthusiasm. His (*sic*) husband, a man with little thin lips, receding forehead, and a prodigious nose, is an excessive bore. His nose is sometimes quite Slawkenbergian—it weighs on the

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imagination to look at it. It is that sort of nose which transforms all the g's its wearer utters into k's. It is a nose once seen never to be forgotten, and which requires the utmost stretch of Christian charity to forgive. I, you know, have a little turn-up nose ; Hogg has a large hook one ; but add them both together, square them, cube them, you would have but a faint idea of the nose to which I refer.

I most devoutly wish I were living near London. I do not think I shall settle so far off as Richmond ; and to inhabit any intermediate spot on the Thames would be to expose myself to the river damps ; not to mention that it is not much to my taste. My inclinations point to Hampstead ; but I do not know whether I should not make up my mind to something more completely suburban. What are mountains, trees, heaths, or even the glorious and ever-beautiful sky, with such sunsets as I have seen at Hampstead, to friends ? Social enjoyment, in some form or other, is the alpha and omega of existence. All that I see in Italy—and from my tower window I now see the magnificent peaks of the Apennines half enclosing the plain—is nothing ; it dwindles into smoke in the mind, when I think of some familiar forms of scenery, little perhaps in themselves, over which old remembrances have thrown a delightful colour. How we prize what we despised when present ! So the ghosts of our dead associations rise and haunt us, in revenge for our having let them starve, and abandoned them to perish.

You don't tell me if you see the Boinvilles ; nor are they included in the list of the *conviti* at the monthly symposium. I will attend it in imagination.

One thing, I own, I am curious about ; and in the chance of the letters not coming from Naples, pray tell

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me. What is it you do at the India House? Hunt writes, and says you have got a *situation* in the India House : Hogg that you have an *honourable employment* : Godwin writes to Mary that you have got *so much or so much* : but nothing of what you do. The devil take these general terms. Not content with having driven all poetry out of the world, at length they make war on their own allies ; nay, on their very parents, dry facts. If it had not been the age of generalities, any one of these people would have told me what you did.

I have been much better these last three weeks. My work on the "Cenci," which was done in two months, was a fine antidote to nervous medicines, and kept up, I think, the pain in my side, as sticks do a fire. Since then, I have materially improved. I do not walk enough. Clare, who is sometimes my companion, does not dress in exactly the right time. I have no stimulus to walk. Now, I go sometimes to Livorno on business ; and that does me good.

I have been reading Calderon in Spanish. A kind of Shakespeare is this Calderon ; and I have some thoughts if I find that I cannot do anything better, of translating some of his plays.

The *Examiners* I receive. Hunt, as a political writer, pleases me more and more. Adieu. Mary and Clare send their best remembrances.—Your most faithful friend,

P. B. SHELLEY

Pray send me some books, and Clare would take it as a great favour if you would send her *music books*.

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Shelley numbers the inhabitants of Lord Byron's
menagerie ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

RAVENNA, *August* 1821

MY DEAR PEACOCK,—I received your last letter just as I was setting off from the Bagni on a visit to Lord Byron at this place. Many thanks for all your kind attention to my accursed affairs. I am happy to tell you that my income is satisfactorily arranged, although Horace Smith having received it, and being still on his slow journey through France, I cannot send you, as I wished to have done, the amount of my debt immediately, but must defer it till I see him or till my September quarter, which is now very near. I am very much obliged to you for your way of talking about it—but of course, if I cannot do you any good, I will not permit you to be a sufferer by me.

I have sent by the Gisbornes a copy of the *Elegy on Keats*. The subject, I know, will not please you; but the composition of the poetry, and the taste in which it is written, I do not think bad. You and the enlightened public will judge. Lord Byron is in excellent cue both of health and spirits. He has got rid of all those melancholy and degrading habits which he indulged at Venice. He lives with one woman, a lady of rank here, to whom he is attached, and who is attached to him, and is in every respect an altered man. He has written three more cantos of "Don Juan." I have yet only heard the fifth, and I think that every word of it is pregnant with immortality. I have not seen his late plays, except "Marino Falieri," which is very well, but not so transcendently fine as the "Don Juan." Lord Byron gets up at *two*. I get up, quite contrary to my usual custom, but one must sleep or die, like Southey's sea-

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snake in "Kehama," at 12. After breakfast we sit talking till six. From six till eight we gallop through the pine forests which divide Ravenna from the sea ; we then come home and dine, and sit up gossiping till six in the morning. I don't suppose this will kill me in a week or fortnight, but I shall not try it longer. Lord B.'s establishment consists, besides servants, of ten horses, eight enormous dogs, three monkeys, five cats, an eagle, a crow, and a falcon ; and all these, except the horses, walk about the house, which every now and then resounds with their unarbitrated quarrels, as if they were the masters of it. Lord B. thinks you wrote a pamphlet signed "John Bull" ; he says he knew it by the style resembling "Melincourt," of which he is a great admirer. I read it, and assured him that it could not possibly be yours. I write nothing, and probably shall write no more. It offends me to see my name classed among those who have no name. If I cannot be something better, I had rather be nothing, and the accursed cause, to the downfall of which I dedicate what powers I may have had, flourishes like a cedar and covers England with its boughs. My motive was never the infirm desire of fame ; and if I should continue an author, I feel that I should desire it. This cup is justly given to one only of an age ; indeed, participation would make it worthless : and unfortunate they who seek it and find it not.

I congratulate you—I hope I ought to do so—on your expected stranger. He is introduced into a rough world. My regards to Hogg, and Co[u]lson if you see him.—Ever most faithfully yours,
P. B. S.

After I have sealed my letter, I find that my enumeration of the animals in this Circean Palace was defective,

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and that in a material point. I have just met on the grand staircase five peacocks, two guinea hens, and an Egyptian crane. I wonder who all these animals were before they were changed into these shapes.

Charles Dickens sends an American the news from
America      

FULLER'S HOTEL, WASHINGTON
Monday, March 14, 1842

MY DEAR FELTON,—I was more delighted than I can possibly tell you, to receive (last Saturday night) your welcome letter. We and the oysters missed you terribly in New York. You carried away with you more than half the delight and pleasure of my New World; and I heartily wish you could bring it back again.

There are very interesting men in this place—highly interesting, of course—but it's not a comfortable place; is it? If spittle could wait at table we should be nobly attended, but as that property has not been imparted to it in the present state of mechanical science, we are rather lonely and orphan-like, in respect of "being looked arter." A blithe black was introduced on our arrival, as our peculiar and especial attendant. He is the only gentleman in the town who has a peculiar delicacy in intruding upon my valuable time. It usually takes seven rings and a threatening message from — to produce him; and when he comes, he goes to fetch something, and, forgetting it by the way, comes back no more.

We have been in great distress, really in distress, at

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the non-arrival of the *Caledonia*. You may conceive what our joy was, when, while we were out dining yesterday, Putnam arrived with the joyful intelligence of her safety. The very news of her having really arrived seemed to diminish the distance between ourselves and home, by one half at least.

And this morning (though we have not yet received our heap of despatches, for which we are looking eagerly forward to this night's mail)—this morning there reached us unexpectedly, through the Government bag (Heaven knows how they came there !), two of our many and long-looked-for letters, wherein was a circumstantial account of the whole conduct and behaviour of our pets ; with marvellous relations of Charley's precocity at a Twelfth Night juvenile party at Macready's ; and tremendous predictions of the governess, dimly suggesting his having got out of pot-hooks and hangers, and darkly insinuating the possibility of his writing us a letter before long ; and many other workings of the same prophetic spirit, in reference to him and his sisters, very gladdening to their mother's heart, and not at all depressing to their father's. There was, also, the doctor's report, which was a clean bill ; and the nurse's report, which was perfectly electrifying ; showing as it did how Master Walter had been weaned, and had cut a double tooth, and done many other extraordinary things, quite worthy of his high descent. In short, we were made very happy and grateful ; and felt as if the prodigal father and mother had got home again.

What do you think of this incendiary card being left at my door last night ? "General G. sends compliments to Mr. Dickens, and called with two literary ladies. As the two L.L.'s are ambitious of the honour of a personal introduction to Mr. D., General G. requests the honour

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of an appointment for to-morrow." I draw a veil over my sufferings. They are sacred. We shall be in Buffalo, please Heaven, on the thirtieth of April. If I don't find a letter from you in the care of the postmaster at that place, I'll never write to you from England.

But if I *do* find one, my right hand shall forget its cunning before I forget to be your truthful and constant correspondent ; not, dear Felton, because I promised it, nor because I have a natural tendency to correspond (which is far from being the case), nor because I am truly grateful to you for, and have been made truly proud by, that affectionate and elegant tribute which — sent me, but because you are a man after my own heart, and I love you *well*. And for the love I bear you, and the pleasure with which I shall always think of you, and the glow I shall feel when I see your handwriting in my own home, I hereby enter into a solemn league and covenant to write as many letters to you as you write to me, at least. Amen.

Come to England ! Come to England ! Our oysters are small, I know ; they are said by Americans to be coppery ; but our hearts are of the largest size. We are thought to excel in shrimps, to be far from despicable in point of lobsters, and in periwinkles are considered to challenge the universe. Our oysters, small though they be, are not devoid of the refreshing influence which that species of fish is supposed to exercise in these latitudes. Try them and compare.—Affectionately yours,

CHARLES DICKENS

The Travellers

Lowell narrates to his friend John Holmes the
humours of Dresden o o o o

(To John Holmes)

DRESDEN, *January* 1856

MY DEAR JOHN,— . . . Here is an inscription I
copied for you in a village inn :

“Fürchte Gott
So wirst du selig !
Trinke Bier
So wirst du fröhlich !
D' rum fürchte Gott
und
Trinke Bier
So wirst du selig
und
Fröhlich hier !”

Fear thou God
And thou'lt be holy !
Drink thou beer
And thou'lt be jolly !
So fear thou God
and
Drink thou beer
And thou'lt be holy
and
Jolly here !

Around the room, just as in our farm-houses and country taverns, hung samplers and urns with *very* weeping willows—also writing-exercises of the children consisting of copies of verses addressed to the mother. There were silhouettes, too, of all the family, and one of the landlord in his youth as a trooper—painted bright blue and with a very long gilded sword—in a ferociously murderous attitude. This was a lithograph, and you must know that they are sold at all the fairs and serve indifferently for any unfortunate who is drawn for a soldier, the only difference being in the names written underneath.

The landlord was delightfully unlike his picture, having grown enormously fat, and scarce able to rise from his corner by the great stove and pull off his little skull-cap to say, “Your most obedient servant, sir.” Here is another

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inscription from the same place. It is not an uncommon one and is very pleasing.

“Bis hierher hat Gott geholfen,
Gott hilft noch—
Und Gott wird weiter helfen.”

Hitherto hath God still holpen,
God helps yet—
And God will farther help us.

But there is a peculiarity here that exists, I think, nowhere else, and that is the column of private announcements in the *Anzeiger*—a paper wholly devoted to advertisements. Here people inform the public of their marriage, of deaths in the family, lovers make assignations, friends wish each other joy on birthdays. *E.g.*—

“To-day at three o'clock in the morning ended, after a short but most painful illness, our good mother, sister, and aunt, Mrs. Ernestine Caroline, widowed apothecary Wehner, born Uhlich. Whoever knew the worth of the blessed gone-to-sleep will measure our great pain and not refuse a silent sympathy. Dresden, 10 Jan., 1856. Rudolph Wehner, pianist, in the name of the other left-behinds!” (I translate literally).

The next is probably from one of the Guild of Mary hight Magdalene: “To Henry Held a thrice-thundering-health on his to-day 33d birthday! [cradle-feast]. Marie H.”

This is from a dependant or poor relation, I surmise: “To Madame W. Schwarze, on her to-day's cradle-feast, offers congratulations with all respect. M. G.”

Here is an anonymous one: “Mr. Mez is requested not to mix himself in other people's affairs, though he is a suitor of Miss E. Besides, he has very much deceived himself. All is not gold that glisters.”

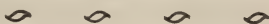
The Travellers

All these I have copied out of the same paper.

Here is another specimen: "The this morning at 3 o'clock happily accomplished delivery of his wife of a healthy Boy announces earnestly hereby to worthy friends and acquaintances—the Director Z. F. Zencke." "This forenoon God made us a present [literal] of a lusty daughterkin. Julius and Teresa Zäkel." "As newly-married present their compliments, Theodore Roack, practical physician, and Clara Roack, born Drescher." Sometimes the advertisements have a German thoroughness about them that is quite amusing. I enclose one at random. . . . Ever yours affectionately,

J. R. L.

R. L. S. in San Francisco



January 10, 1880

MY DEAR COLVIN,—This is a circular letter to tell my estate fully. You have no right to it, being the worst of correspondents; but I wish to efface the impression of my last, so to you it goes.

Any time between eight and half-past nine in the morning, a slender gentleman in an ulster, with a volume buttoned into the breast of it, may be observed leaving No. 608 Bush and descending Powell with an active step. The gentleman is R. L. S.; the volume relates to Benjamin Franklin, on whom he meditates one of his charming essays. He descends Powell, crosses Market, and descends in Sixth on a branch of the original Pine Street Coffee House, no less; I believe he would be capable of going to the original itself, if he could only find it. In the branch he seats himself at a table covered with waxcloth, and a pampered menial, of High-Dutch

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extraction and, indeed, as yet only partially extracted, lays before him a cup of coffee, a roll and a pat of butter, all, to quote the deity, very good. A while ago, and R. L. S. used to find the supply of butter insufficient ; but he has now learned the art to exactitude, and butter and roll expire at the same moment. For this refection he pays ten cents, or five pence sterling (£0, os. 5d.).

Half an hour later, the inhabitants of Bush Street observe the same slender gentleman armed, like George Washington, with his little hatchet, splitting, kindling, and breaking coal for his fire. He does this quasi-publicly upon the window-sill ; but this is not to be attributed to any love of notoriety, though he is indeed vain of his prowess with the hatchet (which he persists in calling an axe), and daily surprised at the perpetuation of his fingers. The reason is this : that the sill is a strong, supporting beam, and that blows of the same emphasis in other parts of his room might knock the entire shanty into hell. Thenceforth, for from three to four hours, he is engaged darkly with an inkbottle. Yet he is not blacking his boots, for the only pair that he possesses are innocent of lustre and wear the natural hue of the material turned up with caked and venerable slush. The youngest child of his landlady remarks several times a day, as this strange occupant enters or quits the house, "Dere's de author." Can it be that this bright-haired innocent has found the true clue to the mystery ? The being in question is, at least, poor enough to belong to that honourable craft.

His next appearance is at the restaurant of one Donadieu, in Bush Street, between Dupont and Kearney, where a copious meal, half a bottle of wine, coffee and brandy may be procured for the sum of four bits, *alias* fifty cents, £0, 2s. 2d. sterling. The wine is put down in

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a whole bottleful, and it is strange and painful to observe the greed with which the gentleman in question seeks to secure the last drop of his allotted half, and the scrupulousness with which he seeks to avoid taking the first drop of the other. This is partly explained by the fact that if he were to go over the mark—bang would go a ten-pence. He is again armed with a book, but his best friends will learn with pain that he seems at this hour to have deserted the more serious studies of the morning. When last observed, he was studying with apparent zest the exploits of one Rocambole by the late Viscomte Ponson du Terrail. This work, originally of prodigious dimensions, he had cut into liths or thicknesses apparently for convenience of carriage.

Then the being walks, where is not certain. But by half-past four, a light beams from the windows of 608 Bush, and he may be observed sometimes engaged in correspondence, sometimes once again plunged in the mysterious rites of the forenoon. About six he returns to the Branch Original, where he once more imbrues himself to the worth of fivepence in coffee and roll. The evening is devoted to writing and reading, and by eleven or half-past darkness closes over this weird and truculent existence.

As for coin, you see I don't spend much, only you and Henley both seem to think my work rather bosh nowadays, and I do want to make as much as I was making, that is £200; if I can do that, I can swim: last year, with my ill health I touched only £109; that would not do, I could not fight it through on that; but on £200, as I say, I am good for the world, and can even in this quiet way save a little, and that I must do. The worst is my health; it is suspected I had an ague chill yesterday; I shall know by to-morrow, and you know if I am to be laid

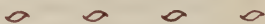
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down with ague the game is pretty well lost. But I don't know ; I managed to write a good deal down in Monterey, when I was pretty sickly most of the time, and, by God, I'll try, ague and all. I have to ask you frankly, when you write, to give me any good news you can, and chat a little, but *just in the meantime* give me no bad. If I could get *Thoreau*, *Emigrant*, and *Vendetta* all finished and out of my hand, I should feel like a man who had made half a year's income in a half-year ; but until the last two are *finished*, you see, they don't fairly count.

I am afraid I bore you sadly with this perpetual talk about my affairs ; I will try and stow it ; but you see, it touches me nearly. I'm the miser in earnest now : last night, when I felt so ill, the supposed ague chill, it seemed strange not to be able to afford a drink. I would have walked half a mile, tired as I felt, for a brandy and soda.—Ever yours,

R. L. S.

R. L. S. fixes his ambition



(To R. A .M. Stevenson)

SARANAC LAKE, ADIRONDACKS

October 1887

MY DEAR BOB,—The cold [of Colorado] was too rigorous for me ; I could not risk the long railway voyage, and the season was too late to risk the Eastern, Cape Hatteras side of the steamer one ; so here we stuck and stick. We have a wooden house on a hill-top, overlooking a river, and a village about a quarter of a mile away, and very wooded hills ; the whole scene is very Highland, bar want of heather and the wooden houses.

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I have got one good thing of my sea voyage: it is proved the sea agrees heartily with me, and my mother likes it; so if I get any better, or no worse, my mother will likely hire a yacht for a month or so in summer. Good Lord! What fun! Wealth is only useful for two things: a yacht and a string quartette. For these two I will sell my soul. Except for these I hold that £700 a year is as much as anybody can possibly want; and I have had more, so I know, for the extray coins were of no use, excepting for illness, which damns everything.

I was so happy on board that ship, I could not have believed it possible. We had the beastliest weather, and many discomforts; but the mere fact of its being a tramp-ship gave us many comforts; we could cut about with the men and officers, stay in the wheel-house, discuss all manner of things, and really be a little at sea. And truly there is nothing else. I had literally forgotten what happiness was, and the full mind—full of external and physical things, not full of cares and labours and rot about a fellow's behaviour. My heart literally sang; I truly care for nothing so much as for that. We took so north a course, that we saw Newfoundland; no one in the ship had ever seen it before.

It was beyond belief to me how she rolled; in seemingly smooth water, the bell striking, the fittings bounding out of our state room. It is worth having lived these last years, partly because I have written some better books, which is always pleasant, but chiefly to have had the joy of this voyage. I have been made a lot of here, and it is sometimes pleasant, sometimes the reverse; but I could give it all up, and agree that —— was the author of my works, for a good seventy-ton schooner and the coins to keep her on. And to think there are parties with yachts who would make the exchange! I know a

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little about fame now ; it is no good compared to a yacht ; and anyway there is more fame in a yacht, more genuine fame ; to cross the Atlantic and come to anchor in Newport (say) with the Union Jack, and go ashore for your letters and hang about the pier, among the holiday yachtsmen—that's fame, that's glory, and nobody can take it away ; they can't say your book is bad ; you *have* crossed the Atlantic. I should do it south by the West Indies, to avoid the damned Banks ; and probably come home by steamer, and leave the skipper to bring the yacht home.

Well, if all goes well, we shall maybe sail out of Southampton water some of these days and take a run to Havre, and try the Baltic or somewhere.

Love to all.—Ever your afft.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

III

ADONAI'S GARRULOUS

I

(To John Hamilton Reynolds)

CARISBROOKE, *April 17, 1817*

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,—Ever since I wrote to my Brothers from Southampton, I have been in a taking, and at this moment I am about to become settled, for I have unpacked my books, put them into a snug corner, pinned up Haydon, Mary Queen of Scots, and Milton with his daughters in a row. In the passage I found a head of Shakspeare, which I had not before seen. It is most likely the same that George spoke so well of, for I like it extremely. Well—this head I have hung over my books, just above the three in a row, having first discarded a French Ambassador: now this alone is a good morning's work. Yesterday I went to Shanklin, which occasioned a great debate in my mind whether I should live there or at Carisbrooke. Shanklin is a most beautiful place; sloping wood and meadow ground reach round the Chine, which is a cleft between the Cliffs of the depth of nearly 300 feet at least. This cleft is filled with trees and bushes in the narrow part

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and as it widens becomes bare, if it were not for primroses on one side, which spread to the very verge of the Sea, and some fishermen's huts on the other, perched midway in the Balustrades of beautiful green Hedges along their steps down to the sands. But the sea, Jack, the sea—the little waterfall—then the white cliff—then St. Catherine's Hill—"the sheep in the meadows, the cows in the corn."

Then, why are you at Carisbrooke? say you. Because, in the first place, I should be at twice the Expense, and three times the inconvenience—next, that from here I can see your continent from a little hill close by, the whole north Angle of the Isle of Wight, with the water between us. In the third place, I see Carisbrooke Castle from my window, and have found several delightful wood-alleys, and copses, and quick freshets. As for primroses, the Island ought to be called Primrose Island—that is, if the nation of Cowslips agree thereto, of which there are divers Clans just beginning to lift up their heads. Another reason of my fixing is, that I am more in reach of the places around me. I intend to walk over the Island East—West—North—South. I have not seen many specimens of Ruins—I don't think however I shall ever see one to surpass Carisbrooke Castle. The trench is overgrown with the smoothest turf and the Walls with ivy. The keep within side is one Bower of ivy—a colony of Jacdaws have been there for many years. I dare say I have seen many a descendant of some old cawer who peeped through the bars at Charles the First, when he was there in Confinement. On the road from Cowes to Newport I saw some extensive Barracks, which disgusted me extremely with the Government for placing such a Nest of Debauchery in so beautiful a place. I asked a man on the coach about this—and he said that

Adonais Garrulous

the people had been spoiled. In the room where I slept at Newport, I found this on the window—"O Isle spoilt by the Military!" I must in honesty however confess that I did not feel very sorry at the idea of the women being a little profligate.

The wind is in a sulky fit, and I feel that it would be no bad thing to be the favourite of some Fairy, who would give one the power of seeing how our Friends got on at a distance. I should like, of all Loves, a sketch of you and Tom and George in ink which Haydon will do if you will tell him how I want them. From want of regular rest I have been rather *nervous*—and the passage in *Lear*—"Do you not hear the sea?" has haunted me intensely.

It keeps eternal whispering around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand Caverns, till the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be mov'd for days from whence it sometime fell,
When last the winds from Heaven were unbound.
O ye! who have your eye-balls vex'd and tir'd,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;
O ye! whose ears are dinn'd with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody—
Sit ye near some old Cavern's Mouth, and brood
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired.

II

April 18 (1817)

WILL you have the goodness to do this? Borrow a Botanical Dictionary—turn to the words Laurel and Prunus, shew the explanations to your sisters and Mrs. Dilke and without more ado let them send me the Cups,

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Basket and Books they trifled and put off and off while I was in Town. Ask them what they can say for themselves—ask Mrs. Dilke wherefore she does so distress me—let me know how Jane has her health—the weather is unfavourable for her,—tell George and Tom to write. I'll tell you what—on the 23rd was Shakespeare born. Now if I should receive a letter from you, and another from my Brothers on that day 'twould be a parlous good thing. Whenever you write say a word or two on some Passage in Shakespeare that may have come rather new to you, which must be continually happening, notwithstanding that we read the same play forty times—for instance, the following from the Tempest never struck me so forcibly as at present :

“ Urchins

*Shall, for the vast of night that they may work,
All exercise on thee——”*

How can I help bringing to your mind the line—

“ In the dark backward and abysm of time.”

I find I cannot exist without Poetry—without eternal Poetry—half the day will not do—the whole of it—I began with a little but habit has made me a Leviathan. I had become all in a tremble from not having written any thing of late. The Sonnet over-leaf did me good. I slept the better last night for it—this morning, however, I am nearly as bad again. Just now I opened Spenser, and the first Lines I saw were these—

“ The noble heart that harbours virtuous thought,
And is with child of glorious great intent,
Can never rest until it forth have brought
Th'eternal brood of glory excellent——”

Let me know particularly about Haydon, ask him to write to me about Hunt, if it be only ten lines—I hope all is well—I shall forthwith begin my Endymion, which

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I hope I shall have got some way with by the time you come, when we will read our verses in a delightful place I have set my heart upon, near the Castle.

Give my Love to your Sisters severally—to George and Tom. Remember me to Rice, Mr. and Mrs. Dilke and all we know.—Your sincere friend,

JOHN KEATS

III

(To John Hamilton Reynolds)

TEIGNMOUTH, *Saturday* (March 14, 1818)

DEAR REYNOLDS,—I escaped being blown over and blown under and trees and house being toppled on me.—I have, since hearing of Brown's accident, had an aversion to a dose of parapet, and being also a lover of antiquities I would sooner have a harmless piece of Herculaneum sent me quietly as a present than ever so modern a chimney-pot tumbled on to my head. Being agog to see some Devonshire, I would have taken a walk the first day, but the rain would not let me ; and the second, but the rain would not let me ; and the third, but the rain forbade it. Ditto 4—ditto 5—ditto—so I made up my Mind to stop in-doors, and catch a sight flying between the showers : and, behold I saw a pretty valley—pretty cliffs, pretty Brooks, pretty Meadows, pretty trees, both standing as they were created, and blown down as they are uncreated. The green is beautiful as they say, and pity it is that it is amphibious—*mais !* but alas ! the flowers here wait as naturally for the rain twice a day as the Mussels do for the Tide ; so we look upon a brook in these parts as you look upon a splash in your Country. There must be something to

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support this—aye, fog, hail, snow, rain, Mist blanketing up three parts of the year. This Devonshire is like Lydia Languish, very entertaining when it smiles but cursedly subject to sympathetic moisture. You have the sensation of walking under one great Lamp-lighter ; and you can't go on the other side of the ladder to keep your frock clean, and cosset your superstition. Buy a girdle—put a pebble in your mouth—loosen your braces—for I am going among scenery whence I intend to tip you the Damosel Radcliffe—I'll cavern you, and grotto you, and waterfall you, and wood you, and water you, and immense-rock you, and tremendous-sound you, and solitude you. I'll make a lodgment on your glacis by a row of Pines, and storm your covered way with bramble Bushes. I'll have at you with hip and haw small-shot, and cannonade you with Shingles—I'll be witty upon salt-fish, and impede your cavalry with clotted cream. But ah coward ! to talk at this rate to a sick man, or, I hope to one that was sick—for I hope by this you stand on your right foot. If you are not—that's all—I intend to cut all sick people if they do not make up their minds to cut Sickness—a fellow to whom I have a complete aversion, and who strange to say is harboured and countenanced in several houses where I visit—he is sitting now quite impudent between me and Tom—he insults me at poor Jem Rice's—and you have seated him before now between us at the Theatre, when I thought he looked with a longing eye at poor Kean. I shall say, once for all, to my friends, generally and severally, cut that fellow, or I cut you.

I went to the Theatre here the other night, which I forgot to tell George, and got insulted, which I ought to remember to forget to tell any Body ; for I did not fight, and as yet have had no redress—"Lie thou there, sweetheart !" I wrote to Bailey yesterday, obliged to speak in

Adonais Garrulous

a high way, and a damme who's afraid—for I had owed him so long; however, he shall see I will be better in future. Is he in town yet? I have directed to Oxford as the better chance. I have copied my Fourth Book, and shall write the Preface soon. I wish it was all done; for I want to forget it, and make my mind free for something new.

Atkins the coachman, Bartlett the surgeon, Simmons the barber, and the Girls over at the Bonnet shop, say we shall now have a month of seasonable weather—warm, witty and full of invention. Write to me and tell me that you are well or thereabouts, or by the holy Beaucœur, which I suppose is the Virgin Mary, or the repented Magdalen (beautiful name, that Magdalen), I'll take to my wings and fly away to anywhere but old or Nova Scotia. I wish I had a little innocent bit of metaphysic in my head, to criss-cross this letter, but you know a favourite tune is hardest to be remembered when one wants it most and you, I know, have long ere this taken it for granted that I never have any speculations without associating you in them, where they are of a pleasant nature, and you know enough of me to tell the places where I haunt most, so that if you think for five minutes after having read this, you will find it a long letter, and see written in the Air before you, your most affectionate friend,

JOHN KEATS

IV

(To the Misses M. and S. Jeffrey)

TEIGNMOUTH, HAMPSTEAD, *June 4* (1818)

MY DEAR GIRLS,—I will not pretend to string a list of excuses together for not having written before—but must at once confess the indolence of my

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disposition, which makes a letter more formidable to me than a Pilgrimage. I am a fool in delay, for the idea of neglect is an everlasting Knapsack which even now I have scarce power to hoist off. By the bye, talking of everlasting knapsacks, I intend to make my fortune by them in a case of a War (which you must consequently pray for) by contracting with Government for said materials to the economy of one branch of the Revenue. At all events a Tax which is taken from the people and shoulder'd upon the military ought not to be snubb'd at. I promised to send you all the news. Harkee! The whole city corporation, with a deputation from the Fire Offices, are now engaged at the London Coffee house in secret conclave concerning Saint Paul's Cathedral its being washed clean. Many interesting speeches have been demosthenized in said Coffee house as to the cause of the black appearance of the said Cathedral. One of the veal-thigh Aldermen actually brought up three witnesses to depose how they beheld the ci-devant fair Marble turn black on the tolling of the great Bell for the amiable and tea-table lamented Princess—adding moreover that this sort of sympathy in inanimate objects was by no means uncommon, for, said the Gentleman, “as we were once debating in the Common Hall Mr. Waitheman in illustration of some case in point quoted Peter Pindar, at which the head of George the third although in hard marble squinted over the Mayor's seat at the honourable speaker so oddly that he was obliged to sit down.” However I will not tire you about these Affairs for they must be in your Newspapers by this time. You see how badly I have written these last three lines so I will remain here and take a pinch of snuff every five Minutes until my head becomes fit and proper and legitimately inclined to scribble. Oh! there's nothing like a pinch of snuff except,

Adonais Garrulous

perhaps, a few trifles almost beneath a philosopher's dignity such as a ripe Peach or a Kiss that one takes on a lease of 91 moments—on a building lease. Talking of that, is the Capⁿ married yet, or rather married, Miss Mitchell—is she stony hearted enough to hold out this season? Has the Doctor given Miss Perryman a little love powder? tell him to do so. It really would not be unamusing to see her languish a little—Oh she must be quite melting this hot Weather. Are the little Robins weaned yet? Do they walk alone? You have had a christening a top o' the tiles and a Hawk has stood God father and taken the little Brood under the Shadow of its Wings much in the way of Mother Church—a Cat too has very tender bowels in such pathetic Cases. They say we are all (that is our set) mad at Hampstead. There's George took unto himself a wife a week ago and will in a little time sail for America—and I with a friend am preparing for a four months' walk all over the North—and belike Tom not stop here—he has been getting much better—Lord what a Journey I had and what a relief at the end of it—I'm sure I could not have stood it many more days. Hampstead is now in fine order.

I suppose Teignmouth and the *contagious* country is now quite remarkable—you might praise it I dare say in the manner of a grammatical exercise—*The trees are full—the den is crowded—the boats are sailing—the musick is playing.* I wish you were here a little while—but lauk we haven't got any female friend in the house. Tom is taken for a Madman and I being somewhat stunted am taken for nothing—We lounge on the Walk opposite as you might on the Den—I hope the fine season will keep up your mother's Spirits—she was used to be too much downhearted. No Women ought to be born into the world for they may not touch the bottle for

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shame—now a man may creep into a bung hole—However this is a tale of a tub—however I like to play upon a pipe sitting upon a puncheon and intend to be so drawn in the frontispiece to my next book of Pastorals—My Brother's respects and mine to your Mother and all our Loves to you.—Yours very sincerely,

JOHN KEATS

P.S. has many significations—here it signifies Post Script—in the corner of a Handkerchief Polly Saunders—upon a Garter Pretty Secret—upon a Band Box Pink Sattin—at the Theatre Princes Side—on a Pulpit Parson's Snuffle—and at a Country Ale House Pail Sider.

V

(To Thomas Keats)

AUCHENCAIRN, *July 3* (1818)

MY DEAR TOM,—We are now in Meg Merrilies' country, and have, this morning, passed through some parts exactly suited to her. Kirkcudbright County is very beautiful, very wild, with craggy hills, somewhat in the Westmoreland fashion. We have come down from Dumfries to the sea-coast part of it. . . .

Yesterday was passed in Kirkcudbright; the country is very rich, very fine and with a little of Devon. I am now writing at Newton Stewart, six miles into Wigtown. Our landlady of yesterday said, "Very few Southerners passed hereaways." The children jabber away as if in a foreign language; the barefooted girls look very much in keeping,—I mean with the scenery about them. Brown praises their cleanliness and appearance of

Adonais Garrulous

comfort, the neatness of their cottages, etc.—it may be—they are very squat among trees and fern and heath and broom, on level slopes and heights—but I wish they were as snug as those up the Devonshire valleys. We are lodged and entertained in great varieties. We dined yesterday on dirty bacon, dirtier eggs, and dirtiest potatoes, with a slice of salmon—we breakfast this morning in a nice carpeted room, with sofa, hair-bottomed Chairs, and green-baized Mahogany. A spring by the road-side is always welcome. We drink water for dinner, diluted with a Gill of whisky.

July 6 (1818).—Yesterday morning we set out from Glenluce, going some distance round to see some rivers : they were scarcely worth the while. We went on to Stranraer, in a burning sun, and had gone about six miles when the Mail overtook us. We got up, were at Port Patrick in a jiffey, and I am writing now in little Ireland. The dialects on the neighbouring shores of Scotland and Ireland are much the same, yet I can perceive a great difference in the nations, from the chambermaid at this *nate toone* kept by Mr. Kelly. She is fair, kind and ready to laugh, because she is out of the horrible dominion of the Scotch Kirk. A Scotch girl stands in terrible awe of the Elders—poor little Susannahs, they will scarcely laugh, their Kirk is greatly to be damned. These Kirkmen have done Scotland good (query?). They have made men, women ; old men, young men ; old women, young women ; boys, girls ; and all infants careful—so that they are formed into regular phalanges of savers and gainers. Such a thrifty army cannot fail to enrich their Country, and give it a greater appearance of comfort than that of their [this?] poor rash neighbourhood. These Kirkmen have done Scotland harm ; they have banished puns, and laughing, and

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kissing, etc. (except in cases where the very danger and crime must make it very gustful). I shall make a full stop at kissing, for after that, there should be a better parenthesis, and go on to remind you of the fate of Burns—poor unfortunate fellow, his disposition was Southern—how sad it is when a luxurious imagination is obliged, in self-defence, to deaden its delicacy in vulgarity and in things attainable, that it may not have leisure to go mad after things that are not. No man, in such matters, will be content with the experience of others. It is true that out of suffering there is no dignity, no greatness, that in the most abstracted pleasure there is no lasting happiness. Yet who would not like to discover over again that Cleopatra was a Gipsy, Helen a rogue, and Ruth a deep one? I have not sufficient reasoning faculty to settle the doctrine of thrift, as it is consistent with the dignity of human Society—with the happiness of Cottagers. All I can do is by plump contrasts; were the fingers made to squeeze a guinea or a white hand?—were the lips made to hold a pen or a kiss? and yet in Cities man is shut out from his fellows if he is poor—the cottages must be very dirty and very wretched if she be not thrifty—the present state of society demands this, and this convinces me the world is very young, and in a very ignorant state. We live in a barbarous age—I would sooner be a wild deer, than a girl under the dominion of the Kirk; and I would sooner be a wild hog, than be the occasion of a poor Creature's penance before those execrable elders.

Adonais Garrulous

VI

(To Fanny Keats)

WINCHESTER, *August 28*

POSTMARK, *August 29, 1819*

MY DEAR FANNY,—You must forgive me for suffering so long a space to elapse between the dates of my letters. It is more than a fortnight since I left Shanklin chiefly for the purpose of being near a tolerable Library, which after all is not to be found in this place. However we like it very much: it is the pleasantest Town I ever was in, and has the most recommendations of any. There is a fine Cathedral which to me is always a source of amusement, part of it built 1400 years ago; and the more modern by a magnificent Man, you may have read of in our History, called William of Wickham. The whole town is beautifully wooded. From the hill at the eastern extremity you see a prospect of Streets, and old Buildings mixed up with Trees. Then there are the most beautiful streams about I ever saw—full of Trout. There is the Foundation of St. Croix about half a mile in the fields—a charity greatly abused.

We have a Collegiate School, a Roman Catholic School; a chapel ditto and a nunnery! And what improves it all is, the fashionable inhabitants are all gone to Southampton. We are quiet—except a fiddle that now and then goes like Gimlet through my Ears—our Landlady's son not being quite a Proficient.

The delightful Weather we have had for two Months is the highest gratification I could receive—no chill'd red noses—no shivering—but fair atmosphere to think in—a clean towel mark'd with the mangle and a basin of clear Water to drench one's face with ten times a

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day : no need of much exercise—a Mile a day being quite sufficient. My greatest regret is that I have not been well enough to bathe though I have been two Months by the sea side and live now close to delicious bathing. Still I enjoy the Weather—I adore fine Weather as the greatest blessing I can have. Give me Books, fruit, French wine and fine weather and a little music out of doors played by some one I do not know—not pay the price of one's time for a jig—but a little chance music : and I can pass a summer very quietly without caring much about Fat Louis, fat Regent or the Duke of Wellington.

Why have you not written to me? Because you were in expectation of George's letter and so waited? Mr. Brown is copying out our Tragedy of Otho the Great in a superb style—better than it deserves—there as I said is labour in vain for the present. I had hoped to give Kean another opportunity to shine. What can we do now? There is not another actor of Tragedy in all London or Europe. The Covent Garden Company is execrable. Young is the best among them and he is a ranting coxcombical tasteless Actor—a Disgust, a Nausea—and yet the very best after Kean. What a set of barren asses are actors ! I should like now to promenade round your Gardens—apple-tasting—pear-tasting—plum-judging — apricot-nibbling — peach-scrunching — nectarine-sucking and melon-carving. I have also a great feeling for antiquated cherries full of sugar cracks—and a white currant tree kept for company. I admire lolling on a lawn by a water-lillied pond to eat white currants and see gold fish : and go to the Fair in the Evening if I'm good. There is not hope for that—one is sure to get into some mess before evening. Have these hot days I brag of so much been well or ill for your health? Let me hear soon.—Your affectionate Brother,

JOHN

IV

FIRST CENTURY A.D.

Four Letters of Pliny the Younger ♪ ♪ ♪

(To *Bebius*)

MY friend and guest *Tranquillus* has an inclination to purchase a small farm, of which, as I am informed, an acquaintance of yours intends to dispose.

I beg you would endeavour he may obtain it on reasonable terms ; which will add to his satisfaction in the purchase. A dear bargain is always disagreeable, particularly as it is a reflection on the buyer's judgment.

There are several circumstances attending this little villa, which (supposing my friend has no objection to the price) are extremely suitable to his taste and desires ; the convenient distance from *Rome*, the goodness of the roads, the smallness of the building, and the very few acres of land around it, which are enough to amuse, but not to employ him.

To a man of the literary turn that *Tranquillus* is it is sufficient if he has but a small spot to relieve the mind and divert the eye, where he may saunter round his grounds, traverse his single walk, grow familiar with his two or three vines, and count his little plantations. I

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mention these particulars to let you see how much he will be obliged to me, as I shall be to you, if you can help him to this convenient little box, at a price of which he shall have no occasion to repent. Farewell.

(To Priscus)

AS I know you gladly embrace every opportunity of obliging me, so there is no man to whom I had rather lay myself under an obligation.

I apply to you, therefore, preferably to anybody else, for a favour which I am extremely desirous of obtaining. You, who are at the head of a very considerable army, have many opportunities of exercising your generosity ; and the length of time you have enjoyed that post, must have enabled you to provide for all your own friends. I hope you will now turn your eyes upon some of mine : they are but a few indeed for whom I shall solicit you ; though your generous disposition, I know, would be better pleased if the number were greater. But it would ill become me to trouble you with recommending more than one or two ; at present I will only mention Voconius Romanus. His father was of great distinction among the Roman knights ; and his father-in-law, or, as I might more properly call him, his second father (for his affectionate treatment of Voconius entitles him to that appellation), was still more conspicuous. His mother was one of the most considerable ladies of Upper Spain : you know what character the people of that province bear, and how remarkable they are for the strictness of their manners. As for himself, he has been lately admitted into the sacred order of priesthood. Our friendship began with our studies, and we were early united in the closest intimacy. We lived together under

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the same roof in town and country, as he shared with me my most serious and my gayest hours : and where, indeed, could I have found a more faithful friend, or more agreeable companion? In his conversation, even in his very voice and countenance, there is the most amiable sweetness ; as at the bar he discovers an elevated genius, an easy and harmonious elocution, a clear and penetrating apprehension. He has so happy a turn for epistolary writing, that were you to read his letters, you would imagine they had been dictated by the Muses themselves. I love him with more than common affection, and I know he returns it with equal ardour. Even in the earlier part of our lives, I warmly embraced every opportunity of doing him all the good offices which then lay in my power ; as I have lately obtained for him of the Emperor, the privilege granted to those who have three children. A favour which though Cæsar very rarely bestows, and always with great caution, yet he conferred at my request, in such a manner as to give it the air and grace of being his own choice. The best way of shewing that I think he deserves the obligations he has already received from me, is by adding more to them, especially as he always accepts my favours with so much gratitude as to merit farther. Thus I have given you a faithful account of Romanus, and informed you how thoroughly I have experienced his worth, and how much I love him. Let me intreat you to honour him with your patronage in a way suitable to the generosity of your heart and the eminence of your station. But above all, admit him into a share of your affection ; for though you were to confer upon him the utmost you have in your power to bestow, you can give him nothing so valuable as your friendship. That you may see he is worthy of it, even to the highest degree of intimacy, I

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have sent you this short sketch of his character. I should continue my intercessions in his behalf, but that I am sure you do not love to be pressed and I have already repeated them in every line of this letter ; for to show a just reason for what one asks, is to intercede in the strongest manner. Farewell.

(To Calvisius)

I NEVER spent any time more agreeably, I think, than I did lately with Spurinna. I am so much pleased with the uninterrupted regularity of his way of life, that if ever I should arrive at old age, there is no man whom I would sooner choose for my model. I look upon order in human actions, especially at that advanced period, with the same sort of pleasure as I behold the settled course of the heavenly bodies. In youths, indeed, there is a certain irregularity and agitation by no means unbecoming ; but in age, when business is unseasonable and ambition indecent, all should be calm and uniform.

This rule Spurinna religiously pursues throughout his whole conduct. Even in those transactions which one might call minute and inconsiderable did they not occur every day, he observes a certain periodical season and method. The first part of the morning he devotes to study ; at eight he dresses and walks about three miles, in which he enjoys at once contemplation and exercise. At his return, if he has any friends with him in his house, he enters upon some polite and useful topic of conversation ; if he is alone somebody reads to him ; and sometimes too when he is not, if it is agreeable to his company. When this is over he reposes himself, and then again either takes up a book, or falls into some discourse even more entertaining and instructive. He

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afterwards takes the air in his chariot, either with his wife (who is a lady of uncommon merit) or with some friend : a happiness which lately was mine !—How agreeable, how noble is the enjoyment of him in that hour of privacy ! You would fancy you were hearing some worthy of ancient times, inflaming your heart with the most heroic examples, and instructing your mind with the most exalted precepts : which yet he delivers with so modest an air, that there is not the least appearance of dictating in his conversation. When he has thus taken a tour of about seven miles, he gets out of his chariot and walks a mile more, after which he returns home, and either reposes himself, or retires to his study. He has an excellent taste for poetry, and composes in the lyric manner, both in Greek and Latin, with great judgment. It is surprising what an ease of spirit and gaiety runs through his verses, which the merit of the author renders still more valuable. When the baths are ready, which in winter is about three o'clock, and in summer about two, he undresses himself ; and if there happens to be no wind, he walks for some time in the sun. After this he plays for a considerable time at tennis ; for by this sort of exercise too, he combats the effects of old age. When he has bathed, he throws himself upon his couch till supper time, and in the meanwhile some agreeable and entertaining author is read to him. In this, as in all the rest, his friends are at full liberty to partake ; or to employ themselves in any other manner more suitable to their taste. You sit down to an elegant yet frugal repast, which is served up in pure and antique plate. He has likewise a complete equipage for his side-board, in Corinthian metal, which is his pleasure, not his passion. At his table he is frequently entertained with comedians, that even his very amusements may be seasoned with

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good sense ; and though he continues there, even in summer, till the night is something advanced, yet he prolongs the feast with so much affability and politeness, that none of his guests ever think it tedious. By this method of living he has preserved all his senses entire and his body active and vigorous to his seventy-eighth year, without discovering any appearance of old age, but the wisdom. This is a sort of life which I ardently aspire after ; as I purpose to enjoy it, when I shall arrive at those years which will justify a retreat from business. In the meanwhile I am embarrassed with a thousand affairs, in which Spurinna is at once my support and my example. As long as it became him he entered into all the duties of public life.

It was by passing through the various offices of the state, by governing of provinces, and by indefatigable toil, that he merited the repose he now enjoys. I propose to myself the same course and the same end ; and I give it to you under my hand that I do so. If an ill-timed ambition should carry me beyond it, produce this letter against me, and condemn me to repose, whenever I can enjoy it without being reproached with indolence. Farewell.

(To Fuscus)

YOU desire to know in what manner I dispose of my time in my summer villa at Tuscum. I rise just when I find myself in the humour, though generally with the sun ; sometimes indeed sooner, but seldom later. When I am up I continue to keep the shutters of my chamber-windows closed, as darkness and silence wonderfully promote meditation. Thus free and abstracted from those outward objects which dissipate

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attention, I am left to my own thoughts ; nor suffer my mind to wander with my eyes in subjection to my mind, which, when they are not distracted by a multiplicity of external objects, see nothing but what the imagination represents to them. If I have any composition upon my hands, this is the time I choose to consider it, not only with respect to the general plan, but even the style and expression, which I settle and correct as if I were actually writing. In this manner I compose more or less as the subject is more or less difficult and I find myself able to retain it. Then I call my secretary, and opening the shutters, I dictate to him what I have composed, after which I dismiss him after a little while and then call him in again.

About ten or eleven of the clock (for I do not observe one fixed hour), according as the weather proves, I either walk upon my terrace, or in the covered portico, and there I continue to meditate or dictate what remains upon the subject in which I am engaged. From thence I get into my chariot, where I employ myself as before, when I was walking or in my study ; and find this changing of the scene preserves and enlivens my attention. At my return home, I repose myself ; then I take a walk ; and after that repeat aloud some Greek or Latin oration, not so much for the sake of strengthening my elocution as my digestion ; though indeed the voice at the same time finds its account in this practice. Then I walk again and am anointed, take my exercises, and go into the bath. At supper, if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, some author is read to us ; and after supper we are entertained either with music or an interlude. When that is finished, I take my walk with my family, in the number of which I am not without some persons of literature. Thus we pass our evenings in

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various conversation ; and the day, even when it is at the longest, steals away imperceptibly.

Upon some occasions, I change the order in certain of the articles above mentioned. For instance, if I have studied longer or walked more than usual, after my second sleep and reading an oration or two aloud, instead of using my chariot I get on horseback ; by which means I take as much exercise and lose less time. The visits of my friends from the neighbouring villages claim some part of the day ; and sometimes, by an agreeable interruption, they come in very seasonably to relieve me when I am fatigued. I now and then amuse myself with sporting, but always take my tablets into the field, that though I should not meet with game, I may at least bring home something. Part of my time too (though not as much as they desire) is allotted to my tenants ; and I find their rustic complaints give a zest to my studies and engagements of the polite kind. Farewell.

V

E. F.G.

Eight letters of Edward FitzGerald ♪ ♪ ♪

I

(To W. F. Pollock)

GELDESTONE, *June 24/42*

DEAR POLLOCK,—There is that poor fellow Thackeray gone off to Ireland: and what a lazy beast I am for not going with him. But except for a journey of two days, I get as dull as dirt. I wish somebody had gone with him. But he will find lots of companions in Ireland. What is become of A. T.? ¹ You never told me that, nor how his book went on: about which I have really a curiosity. I see the advertisement of Edwin the Fair in the papers: something about the Heptarchy, I suppose; a stupid time, whenever it was. And my dear Daddy's Tragedy ² too, has any one read it?

We have been burnt up here, but to-day (the grass being just mowed) it rains pitchforks, which might be useful if not coming in such great numbers. But our garden is full of roses and all capital things. I wish trade was going on well: and that we could be left as we are.

¹ Tennyson.

² Wordsworth's "The Borderers."

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I have written a note to Spedding, such an one as he sent me, a ruffian ; I have the pleasure of abusing some of his idols in it. A man on the coach the other day told me that all was being settled very easily in America, but stage-coach politicians are not always to be trusted. I propose that we leave Spedding as a hostage in the hands of the Americans. They must send over Willis or some one of their great men.

When do you set off on your trip to the Hebrides ? or your yachting, wherever it is ? I mean to go to Blenheim to see a Raffaele this year, and that is all I propose to do. No sights recompense the often undoing and doing up of a carpet-bag. What then is the stamping down, strapping, and locking up of a trunk, with all the blood in your head ! If one were rich, and travelled with a valet to do all, it would be well. The only other alternative is to travel with nothing but the clothes on one's back.

Sic cogitabat.—Yours ever,

E. F.G.

II

(To Samuel Laurence)

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE (*January 30, 1848*)

MY DEAR LAURENCE,—How are you—how are you getting on ? A voice from the tombs thus addresses you ; respect the dead, and answer.

Barton is well ; that is, I left him well on Friday ; but he was just going off to attend a Quaker's funeral in the snow : whether he has survived that, I don't know. To-morrow is his Birth-day : and I am going (if he be alive) to help him to celebrate it. His portrait has been hung (under my directions) over the mantel-piece in his

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sitting-room, with a broad margin of some red stuff behind it, to set it off. You may turn up your nose at all this ; but let me tell you it is considered one of the happiest contrivances ever adopted in Woodbridge. Nineteen people out of twenty like the portrait much ; the twentieth, you may be sure, is a man of no taste at all.

I hear you were for a long time in Cumberland. Did you paint a waterfall—or old Wordsworth—or Skiddaw, or any of the beauties ? Did you see anything so inviting to the pencil as the river Deben ? When are you coming to see us again ? Churchyard relies on your coming ; but then he is a very sanguine man, and, though a lawyer, wonderfully confident in the promises of men. How are all your family ? You see I have asked you some questions ; so you must answer them ; and believe me yours truly,

E. FITZGERALD

III

(To Mrs. Cowell)

LONDON, *Friday (April 25, 1856)*

MY DEAR LADY,—The Picture after all did not go down yesterday as I meant, but shall and will go to-morrow (Saturday). Also I shall send you dear Major Moor's *Oriental Fragments* ; an almost worthless Book, I doubt, to those who did not know him—which means, *love* him ! And somehow all of us in our corner of Suffolk knew something of him : and so again loved something of him. For there was nothing at all about him not to be beloved. Ah ! I think how interested he would have been with all this Persian : and how we should have disputed over parts and expressions over a glass of his Shiraz wine (for he had some) in his snug

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Parlour, or in his Cornfields when the Sun fell upon the latest Gleaners. He is dead ! and you will go where he lived, to be dead to me !

Remember to take poor Barton's little Book with you to India ; better than many a better Book to you there !

I got a glimpse of Professor Müller's Essay¹—full of fine things ; but I hardly gather it up into a good whole, which is very likely my fault ; from hasty perusal, ignorance, or other Incapacity. Perhaps, on the other hand, he found the Subject too great for his Space ; and so has left it disproportioned, which the German is not inapt to do. But one may be well thankful for such admirable fragments, perhaps left so in the very honesty that is above rounding them into a specious Theory which will not hold.

[In a footnote to the foregoing letter Mr. Aldis Wright says : " In another letter written about the same time he (E. F.G.) says, ' The letter to Major Price at the beginning is worth any Money, and almost any Love.' This dedication by Major Moor to his old comrade in arms FitzGerald would sometimes try to read aloud, but would break down before he could finish it." I append it here :—

MY DEAR PRICE,—Accept the Dedication of this little Volume — a very trifling testimony of that Esteem and Friendship which have been growing uninterruptedly, not far short of half a century.

Our destinies have run nearly parallel over a considerable portion of the course of our lives. In early days we started as "Soldiers of Fortune" for the same country. So long ago as 1783 we were, though then unknown to

¹ Max Müller's " Essay on Comparative Mythology."

E. F.G.

each other, within gun-shot perhaps, in military operations against TIPPOO on the coast of *Malabar*. We have since served together in the same armies, the same detachments, the same garrisons, and the same regiments. We have together stormed the same forts—have been grievously maimed and mutilated in the service of our dearly beloved Country, and our blood has moistened the same dust.

After an active intertropical servitude of nearly a quarter of a century—having filled almost every staff situation of the same army ; having gained the same military rank ; we returned with an honorable competency resulting from persevering industry and economy, to our native Country, on the same ship ; and have set up our several resting-places within sight of our native hills. Unwilling to be altogether idle or useless, we alike share in the administration of the Justice, and in the preservation of the Peace, of our respective Counties, by acting in various Commissions under the Crown.

Not unobservant while in *India* of the people among whom our early fortunes cast us, or of their languages or literature, we have, since our return, during the lapse of another quarter of a century, resorted to the Press ; and have published to our Countrymen the results of such observances—with this difference,—that yours have been chiefly directed to *Mahommedan*, mine to *Hindu* literature : and with this farther difference ;—that you have made the most of the advantages of a good and classical education, while I have had to contend with the disadvantages of a bad one. You have drank deep, while I have only sipped at those Oriental Literary springs.

They who live long must pay the sad penalties of existence :—must see their old comrades, and associates, and friends, fall around them. If we look back for our early brethren in arms—where are they ? And more and

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more recently we are called to mourn over the ripened Affections of our later years. It behoves us therefore to rivet the more closely the remaining links of Friendship's early chain—and to await, in contentedness and humble hope, its final severance.

With these sentiments and feelings towards you, My dear PRICE, my oldest FELLOW SOLDIER and FRIEND, I am most cordially and affectionately say FAREWELL.

EDWARD MOOR

BEALINGS, SUFFOLK

March 1, 1834]

IV

(To George Crabbe)

MARKET HILL, WOODBRIDGE

Monday (March 10, 1862)

MY DEAR GEORGE,—There is Farlingay left in applepie order, with its good Servants, Gardener, etc., as old Smith left them, and I am asked to take it as it is : and yet—I am afraid to leave the poor Town with its little bustle ! As one grows older, lonelier, and sadder, is not the little Town best, though Farlingay be the Pink of Places ?

I have bought a new Boat, which is not yet from London : and am altering (and I doubt spoiling) my old one, just when I did not want to meddle with it at all. Then, in a sudden fit, I sold out all my Bank Stock into Dutch Funds, which won't give me as much Income ; my only consolation being that, directly after I had done it, the Bank Clerk (here) rushed out from his Desk to assure me Bank Stock had fallen because a smaller Dividend is expected. I believe I am now more considered in the Town, as having exhibited this fore-knowledge.

E. F.G.

The "Town Hall" is being decorated with Flags, etc., for the Odd Fellows Dinner, which comes off To-day. But the Town itself is distracted with the Question as to where the New School shall be; Bishop Taylor having persuaded the Inspector to choose Land near his (the Bishop's) Estate down in the lower Part of the Town (at foot of the sandhill). So the Bishop walks about enveloped in his virtue, and proof against all unchristian malevolence.

I have been in my glory tearing up 20 Volumes of the Gentleman's Magazine to get out Scraps of Mitford and Green's Diary, of which I make Volumes, and then call them my Works.

I have hung my Pictures, which are spoilt by a vile Paper.

V

(To W. F. Pollock)

MARKET HILL, WOODBRIDGE

October 28 (1867)

NOW, my dear Pollock, I have put on a new Goose-quill Nib, on purpose to write my best MS to you. But the new Nib has very little to say for me: the old Story: dodging about in my Ship for these last five months: indeed during all that time not having lain, I believe, for three consecutive Nights in Christian Sheets. But now all that is over: this very day is my little Ship being dismantled, and to-morrow will she go up to her middle in mud, and here am I anchored to my old Desk for the Winter; and beginning, as usual, to write to my Friends, to tell them what little there is to tell of myself, and asking them to tell what they can of themselves in return. I shall even fire a shot at old Spedding; who

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would not answer my last Letters at all : innocent as they were, I am sure : and asking definite Questions, which he once told me he required if I wanted any Answer. I suppose he is now in Cumberland. What *is* become of Bacon? Are you one of the Converted, who go the whole Hog?

Thompson—no, I mean the Master of Trinity—has replied to my half-yearly Enquiries in a very kind Letter. He tells me that my friend Edward Cowell has pleased all the Audience he had with an inaugural Lecture about Sanskrit. Also, that there is such an Article in the Quarterly about the Talmud as has not been seen (so fine an Article, I mean) for years.

I have had Don Quixote, Boccaccio, and my dear Sophocles (once more) for company on board : the first of these so delightful, that I got to love the very Dictionary in which I had to look out the words : yes, and often the same words over and over again. The Book really seemed to me the most delightful of all Books : Boccaccio, delightful too, but millions of miles behind ; in fact, a whole Planet away.

VI

(To W. F. Pollock)

WOODBIDGE, *November 11* (1867)

MY DEAR POLLOCK,—I must thank you for your Letter—good Fellow as you were to write it. I must say that you never leave one long in doubt as to whether one is any longer acceptable or not.

Not like that Wretch Spedding ; who, since I wrote you, did write to me at last, and confessed that he slightly repented of not writing before. However, I am contented

E. F.G.

that he thinks it worth while to think twice about the matter. He now talks about two more Volumes of Bacon in the Spring : and then he says he will take the reins into his own hands, and publish Volume by Volume as it is finished. He is now *entêté* (I forget how it's spelt) about some sort of Phonetic Alphabet.

I have not yet revived my appetite for Novels : not even for my dear "Woman in White" : which I should like to have read to me ; and which even now exerts a sort of magnetism in drawing me toward the corner of a dark Cupboard, or Closet, in which (like the proprietary Skeleton) she lies.

I have heard from *Mrs.* Alfred, who (as you may know) answers for Husband and Self. She does not give a good Account of one Son (I believe the Eldest) : and Frederic Tennyson, who was at Farringford this Autumn, thinks them both very delicate. Is it to be with A. T., as is said to be the Fate of your great Men : to leave no Posterity ?

Well—and I have heard from the Master of Trinity, who encloses me a Leaf of Proof-sheet of Plato, with good English Notes, corrected, and therefore, I doubt not, written by himself. The Page he encloses is meant to answer a Question I put to him years ago. I don't know when, nor on what occasion. However, I find the Question is left ambiguous even by Scholars.

Are you overrun in London with "Champagne Charlie is my Name" ? A brutal Thing ; nearly worthless—the Tune, I mean—but yet not quite—else it would not become so great a Bore. No : I can see, to my Sorrow, that it has some Go—which Mendelssohn had not. But Mozart, Rossini, and Handel had. I can't help thinking that Opera will have to die for a time : certainly there seems to be no new Blood to keep it

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alive : and the Old Works of Genius want rest. I have never heard Faust : only Bits—which I suppose were thought the best Bits. They were expressive—musically ingenious, etc.—but the part of Hamlet—the one Divine Soul of Music, Melody—was not there. I think that such a Fuss can be made about it only because there is nothing better.

VII

(To E. B. Cowell)

WOODBIDGE, *March 1/69*

MY DEAR COWELL,—. . . My Luggar Captain has just left me to go on his Mackerel Voyage to the Western Coast ; and I don't know when I shall see him again. Just after he went, a muffled bell from the Church here began to toll for somebody's death : it sounded like a Bell under the sea. He sat listening to the Hymn played by the Church chimes last evening, and said he could hear it all as if in Lowestoft Church when he was a Boy, "Jesus our Deliverer"! You can't think what a grand, tender Soul this is, lodged in a suitable carcase.

VIII

(To Fanny Kemble)

WOODBIDGE, *October 17, 1882*

MY DEAR MRS. KEMBLE,—I suppose that you are returned from the Loire by this time ; but as I am not sure that you have returned to the "Hotel des Deux Mondes" whence you dated your last, I make bold once more to trouble Coutts with adding your Address

E. F.G.

to my Letter. I think I shall have it from yourself not long after. I shall like to hear a word about my old France, dear to me from childish associations, and in particular of the Loire, endeared to me by Sévigné; for I never saw the glimmer of its waters myself. . . .

It seems to me (but I believe it seems so every year) that our trees keep their leaves very long; I suppose, because of no severe frosts or winds up to this time. And my garden still shows some Geranium, Salvia, Nasturtium, Great Convolvulus, and that grand African Marigold whose Colour is so comfortable to us Spanish-like Paddies. I have also a dear Oleander which even now has a score of blossoms on it, and touches the top of my little Green-house; having been sent me when "*haut comme ça*," as Marquis Somebody used to say in the days of Louis XIV. Don't you love the Oleander? So clean in its leaves and stem, and so beautiful in its flower; loving to stand in water which it drinks up so fast. I rather worship mine.

VI
ELIA

I

The Failure of Godwin's Play    

December 16, 1800

WE are damn'd !

Not the facetious epilogue could save us. For as the editor of the "Morning Post," quick-sighted gentleman ! hath this morning truly observed, (I beg pardon if I falsify his *words*, their profound *sense* I am sure I retain,) both prologue and epilogue were worthy of accompanying such a piece ; and indeed (mark the profundity, Mister Manning) were received with proper indignation by such of the audience only as thought either worth attending to. PROFESSOR, thy glories wax dim ! Again, the incomparable author of the "True Briton" declareth in *his* paper (bearing same date) that the epilogue was an indifferent attempt at humour and character, and failed in both. I forbear to mention the other papers, because I have not read them. O PROFESSOR, how different thy feelings now (*quantum mutatus ab illo professore, qui in agris philosophiæ tantas victorias aquisivisti*),—how different thy proud feelings but one little week ago,—thy anticipation of thy nine

Elia

nights,—those visionary claps, which have soothed thy soul by day and thy dreams by night! Calling in accidentally on the Professor while he was out, I was ushered into the study; and my nose quickly (most sagacious always) pointed me to four tokens lying loose upon thy table, Professor, which indicated thy violent and satanical pride of heart. Imprimis, there caught mine eye a list of six persons, thy friends, whom thou didst meditate inviting to a sumptuous dinner on the Thursday, anticipating the profits of thy Saturday's play to answer charges; I was in the honoured file! Next, a stronger evidence of thy violent and almost satanical pride, lay a list of all the morning papers (from the "Morning Chronicle" downwards to the "Porcupine,") with the places of their respective offices, where thou wast meditating to insert, and didst insert, an elaborate sketch of the story of thy play—stones in thy enemy's hand to bruise thee with; and severely wast thou bruised, O Professor! nor do I know what oil to pour into thy wounds. Next, which convinced me to a dead conviction of thy pride, violent and almost satanical pride—lay a list of books, which thy un-tragedy-favoured pocket could never answer; Dodsley's Old Plays, Malone's Shakspeare (still harping upon thy play, thy philosophy abandoned meanwhile to Christians and superstitious minds); nay, I believe (if I can believe my memory), that the ambitious Encyclopædia itself was part of thy meditated acquisitions; but many a playbook was there. All these visions are *damned*; and thou, Professor, must read Shakspeare in future out of a common edition; and, hark ye, pray read him to a little better purpose! Last and strongest against thee (in colours manifest as the hand upon Belshazzar's wall), lay a volume of poems by C. Lloyd and C. Lamb. Thy heart misgave thee, that thy assistant

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might possibly not have talent enough to furnish thee an epilogue! Manning, all these things came over my mind; all the gratulations that would have thickened upon him, and even some have glanced aside upon his humble friend; the vanity, and the fame, and the profits (the Professor is £500 ideal money out of pocket by this failure, besides £200 he would have got for the copyright, and the Professor is never much beforehand with the world; what he gets is all by the sweat of his brow and dint of brain, for the Professor, though a sure man, is also a slow); and now to muse upon thy altered physiognomy, thy pale and squalid appearance (a kind of *blue sickness* about the eyelids), and thy crest fallen, and thy proud demand of £200 from thy bookseller changed to an uncertainty of his taking it at all, or giving thee full £50. The Professor has won my heart by this *his* mournful catastrophe. You remember Marshall, who dined with him at my house; I met him in the lobby immediately after the damnation of the Professor's play, and he looked to me like an angel: his face was lengthened, and ALL OVER SWEAT; I never saw such a care-fraught visage; I could have hugged him, I loved him so intensely. "From every pore of him a perfume fell." I have seen that man in many situations, and from my soul I think that a more god-like honest soul exists not in this world. The Professor's poor nerves trembling with the recent shock, he hurried him away to my house to supper; and there we comforted him as well as we could. He came to consult me about a change of catastrophe; but alas! the piece was condemned long before that crisis. I at first humoured him with a specious proposition, but have since joined his true friends in advising him to give it up. He did it with a pang, and is to print it as *his*.

L.

Elia

II

Brawn



16 MITRE-COURT BUILDINGS

Saturday, February 24 [i.e. 23], 1805

DEAR MANNING,—I have been very unwell since I saw you. A sad depression of spirits, a most unaccountable nervousness ; from which I have been partially relieved by an odd accident. You knew Dick Hopkins, the swearing scullion of Caius? This fellow, by industry and agility, has thrust himself into the important situations (no sinecures, believe me) of cook to Trinity Hall and Caius College : and the generous creature has contrived with the greatest delicacy imaginable, to send me a present of Cambridge brawn. What makes it the more extraordinary is, that the man never saw me in his life that I know of. I suppose he has *heard* of me. I did not immediately recognise the donor ; but one of Richard's cards, which had accidentally fallen into the straw, detected him in a moment. Dick, you know, was always remarkable for flourishing. His card imports, that "orders (to wit, for brawn), from any part of England, Scotland, or Ireland, will be duly executed," etc. At first, I thought of declining the present ; but Richard knew my blind side when he pitched upon brawn. 'Tis of all my hobbies the supreme in the eating way. He might have sent sops from the pan, skimmings, crumplets, chips, hog's lard, the tender brown judiciously scalped from a fillet of veal (dexterously replaced by a salamander), the tops of asparagus, fugitive livers, runaway gizzards of fowls, the eyes of martyred pigs, tender effusions of laxative woodcocks, the red spawn of lobsters, leverets' ears, and such pretty filchings common to cooks ; but these had been ordinary presents,

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the everyday courtesies of dishwashers to their sweet hearts. Brawn was a noble thought. It is not every common gullet-fancier that can properly esteem it. It is like a picture of one of the choice old Italian masters. Its gusto is of that hidden sort. As Wordsworth sings of a modest poet,—“you must love him, ere to you he will seem worthy of your love ;” so brawn, you must taste it, ere to you it will seem to have any taste at all. But ’tis nuts to the adept : those that will send out their tongues and feelers to find it out. It will be wooed, and not unsought be won. Now, ham-essence, lobsters, turtle, such popular minions, absolutely *court you*, lay themselves out to strike you at first smack, like one of David’s pictures (they call him *Darveed*), compared with the plain russet-coated wealth of a Titian or a Correggio, as I illustrated above. Such are the obvious glaring heathen virtues of a corporation dinner, compared with the reserved collegiate worth of brawn. Do me the favour to leave off the business which you may be at present upon, and go immediately to the kitchens of Trinity and Caius, and make my most respectful compliments to Mr. Richard Hopkins, and assure him that his brawn is most excellent ; and that I am moreover obliged to him for his innuendo about salt water and bran, which I shall not fail to improve. I leave it to you whether you shall choose to pay him the civility of asking him to dinner while you stay in Cambridge, or in whatever other way you may best like to show your gratitude to *my friend*. Richard Hopkins, considered in many points of view, is a very extraordinary character. Adieu : I hope to see you to supper in London soon, where we will taste Richard’s brawn, and drink his health in a cheerful but moderate cup. We have not many such men in any rank of life as Mr. R. Hopkins. Crisp the

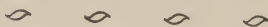
Elia

barber, of St. Mary's, was just such another. I wonder *he* never sent me any little token, some chestnuts, or a puff, or two pound of hair just to remember him by; gifts are like nails. *Præsens ut absens*, that is, your *present* makes amends for your absence.—Yours,

C. LAMB

III

All the news, for China



March 28, 1809

DEAR MANNING,—I sent you a long letter by the ships which sailed the beginning of last month, accompanied with books, etc. Since I last wrote, Holcroft is dead. He died on Thursday last. So there is one of your friends whom you will never see again! Perhaps the next fleet may bring you a letter from Martin Burney, to say that he writes by desire of Miss Lamb, who is not well enough to write herself, to inform you that her brother died on Thursday last, 14th June, etc. But I hope *not*. I should be sorry to give occasion to open a correspondence between Martin and you. This letter must be short, for I have driven it off to the very moment of doing up the packets; and besides, that which I refer to above is a very long one; and if you have received my books, you will have enough to do to read them. While I think on it, let me tell you we are moved. Don't come any more to Mitre Court Buildings. We are at 34 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, and shall be here till about the end of May: then we remove to No. 4 Inner Temple Lane, where I mean to live and die; for I have such horror of moving, that I would not take a benefice from the King, if I was not indulged with non-residence. What a dislocation of comfort is comprised in that word moving! Such a

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heap of little nasty things, after you think all is got into the cart : old dredging-boxes, worn-out brushes, gallipots, vials, things that it is impossible the most necessitous person can ever want, but which the women, who preside on these occasions, will not leave behind if it was to save your soul ; they'd keep the cart ten minutes to stow in dirty pipes and broken matches, to show their economy. Then you can find nothing you want for many days after you get into your new lodgings. You must comb your hair with your fingers, wash your hands without soap, go about in dirty gaiters. Was I Diogenes, I would not move out of a kilderkin into a hogshead, though the first had had nothing but small beer in it, and the second reeked claret. Our place of final destination,—I don't mean the grave, but No. 2 [4] Inner Temple Lane,—looks out upon a gloomy churchyard-like court, called Hare Court, with three trees and a pump in it. Do you know it? I was born near it, and used to drink at that pump when I was a Rechabite of six years old. If you see newspapers you will read about Mrs. Clarke. The sensation in London about this nonsensical business is marvellous. I remember nothing in my life like it. Thousands of ballads, caricatures, lives, of Mrs. Clarke, in every blind alley. Yet in the midst of this stir, a sublime abstracted dancing-master, who attends a family we know in Kensington, being asked a question about the progress of the examination in the House, inquired who Mrs. Clarke was? He had heard nothing of it. He had evaded this omnipresence by utter insignificancy ! The Duke should make that man his confidential valet. I proposed locking him up, barring him the use of his fiddle and red pumps, until he had minutely perused and committed to memory the whole body of the examinations, which employed the House of Commons a fortnight,

Elia

to teach him to be more attentive to what concerns the public. I think I told you of Godwin's little book, and of Coleridge's prospectus, in my last ; if I did not, remind me of it, and I will send you them, or an account of them, next fleet. I have no conveniency of doing it by this. Mrs. — ¹ grows every day in disfavour with God and man. I will be buried with this inscription over me :— "Here lies C. L., the Woman-hater"—I mean that hated ONE WOMAN : for the rest, God bless them, and when he makes any more, make 'em prettier. How do you like the Mandarinesses? Are you on some little footing with any of them? This is Wednesday. On Wednesdays is my levee. The Captain, Martin, Phillips (not the Sheriff), Rickman, and some more, are constant attendants, besides stray visitors. We play at whist, eat cold meat and hot potatoes, and any gentleman that chooses smokes. Why do you never drop in? You'll come some day, won't you?

C. LAMB, etc.

IV

Tommy Bye      

May 28, 1819

MY DEAR M[ANNING],—I want to know how your brother is, if you have heard lately. I want to know about you. I wish you were nearer. How are my cousins, the Gladmans of Wheathamstead, and farmer Bruton? Mrs. Bruton is a glorious woman.

Hail, Mackery End—

This is a fragment of a blank verse poem which I once meditated, but got no further. The E. I. H. has been thrown into a quandary by the strange phenomenon of poor Tommy Bye, whom I have known man and mad—

¹ Probably Mrs. Godwin.

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man twenty-seven years, he being elder here than myself by nine years and more. He was always a pleasant, gossiping, half-headed, muzzy, dozing, dreaming, walk-about, inoffensive chap ; a little too fond of the creature—who isn't at times?—but Tommy had not brains to work off an over-night's surfeit by ten o'clock next morning, and unfortunately, in he wandered the other morning drunk with last night, and with a superfœtation of drink taken in since he set out from bed. He came staggering under his double burthen, like trees in Java, bearing at once blossom, fruit, and falling fruit, as I have heard you or some other traveller tell, with his face literally as blue as the bluest firmament ; some wretched calico that he had mopped his poor oozy front with had rendered up its native dye, and the devil a bit would he consent to wash it, but swore it was characteristic, for he was going to the sale of indigo, and set up a laugh which I did not think the lungs of mortal man were competent to. It was like a thousand people laughing, or the Goblin Page. He imagined afterwards that the whole office had been laughing at him, so strange did his own sounds strike upon his *nonsensorium*. But Tommy has laughed his last laugh, and awoke the next day to find himself reduced from an abused income of £600 per annum to one-sixth of the sum, after thirty-six years' tolerably good service. The quality of mercy was not strained in his behalf ; the gentle dews dropt not on him from heaven. It just came across me that I was writing to Canton. How is Ball ? "Mr. B. is a P——." Will you drop in to-morrow night ? Fanny Kelly is coming, if she does not cheat us. Mrs. *Gold* is well, but proves "uncoined," as the lovers about Wheathampstead would say.

O hard hearted Burrell
With teeth like a squirrel—







Elia

I have not had such a quiet half hour to sit down to a quiet letter for many years. I have not been interrupted above four times. I wrote a letter the other day in alternate lines, black ink and red, and you cannot think how it chilled the flow of ideas. Next Monday is Whit-Monday. What a reflection! Twelve years ago, and I should have kept that and the following holiday in the fields a-Maying. All of those pretty pastoral delights are over. This dead, everlasting dead desk—how it weighs the spirit of a gentleman down! This dead wood of the desk instead of your living trees! But then, again, I hate the Joskins, *a name for Hertfordshire bumpkins*. Each state of life has its inconvenience; but then, again, mine has more than one. Not that I repine, or grudge, or murmur at my destiny. I have meat and drink, and decent apparel; I shall, at least, when I get a new hat.

A red-haired man has just interrupted me. He has broke the current of my thoughts. I haven't a word to add. I don't know why I send this letter, but I have had a hankering to hear about you some days. Perhaps it will go off before your reply comes. If it don't, I assure you no letter was ever welcomer from you, from Paris or Macao.

C. LAMB

V

The Little Pig      

(To S. T. Coleridge)

March 9, 1822

DEAR C.,—It gives me great satisfaction to hear that the pig turned out so well—they are interesting creatures at a certain age—what a pity such buds

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should blow out into the maturity of rank bacon ! You had all some of the crackling—and brain sauce—did you remember to rub it with butter, and gently dredge it a little, just before the crisis ? Did the eyes come away kindly with no Œdipean avulsion ? Was the crackling the colour of the ripe pomegranate ? Had you no complement of boiled neck of mutton before it, to blunt the edge of delicate desire ? Did you flesh maiden teeth in it ? Not that I sent the pig, or can form the remotest guess what part Owen could play in the business. I never knew him give anything away in my life. He would not begin with strangers. I suspect the pig, after all, was meant for me ; but at the unlucky juncture of time being absent, the present somehow went round to Highgate. To confess an honest truth, a pig is one of those things I could never think of sending away. Teals, wigeons, snipes, barn-door fowl, ducks, geese—your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton, collars of brawn, sturgeon, fresh or pickled, your potted char, Swiss cheeses, French pies, early grapes, muscadines, I impart as freely unto my friends as to myself. They are but self-extended ; but pardon me if I stop somewhere—where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity—there my friends (or any good man) may command me ; but pigs are pigs, and I myself therein am nearest to myself. Nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature who bestowed such a boon upon me, if in a churlish mood I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs of remorse I ever felt was when a child—when my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough, I met a venerable old man, not a mendicant, but thereabouts—

Elia

a look-beggar, not a verbal petitioner; and in the coxcombry of taught-charity I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little in all the pride of an Evangelical peacock, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me—the sum it was to her—the pleasure she had a right to expect that I—not the old impostor—should take in eating her cake—the cursed ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like—and I was right. It was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to dunghill with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

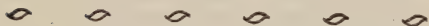
But when Providence, who is better to us all than our aunts, gives me a pig, remembering my temptation and my fall, I shall endeavour to act towards it more in the spirit of the donor's purpose.

Yours (short of pig) to command in everything.

C. L.

VI

The Toast



(To Miss Hutchinson)

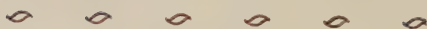
*A*PROPOS of birds—the other day at a large dinner, being call'd upon for a toast, I gave, as the best toast I knew, “Wood-cock toast,” which was drunk with 3 cheers.—Yours affect^y,

C. LAMB

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VII

Sunday



(To J. B. Dibdin)

An answer is requested.

[P.M. *September 9, 1826*]

Saturday

DEAR D[IBDIN],—I have observed that a Letter is never more acceptable than when received upon a rainy day, especially a rainy Sunday; which moves me to send you somewhat, however short. This will find you sitting after Breakfast, which you will have prolonged as far as you can with consistency to the poor handmaid that has the reversion of the Tea Leaves; making two nibbles of your last morsel of *stale* roll (you cannot have hot new ones on the Sabbath), and reluctantly coming to an end, because when that is done, what can you do till dinner? You cannot go to the Beach, for the rain is drowning the sea, turning rank Thetis fresh, taking the brine out of Neptune's pickles, while mermaids sit upon rocks with umbrellas, their ivory combs sheathed for spoiling in the wet of waters foreign to them. You cannot go to the library, for it's shut. You are not religious enough to go to church. O it is worth while to cultivate piety to the gods, to have something to fill the heart up on a wet Sunday! You cannot cast accounts, for your ledger is being eaten up with moths in the Ancient Jewry. You cannot play at draughts, for there is none to play with you, and besides there is not a draught-board in the house. You cannot go to market, for it closed last night. You cannot look in to the shops, their backs are shut upon you. You cannot

Elia

read the Bible, for it is not good reading for the sick and the hypochondriacal. You cannot while away an hour with a friend, for you have no friend round that Wrekin. You cannot divert yourself with a stray acquaintance, for you have picked none up. You cannot bear the chiming of Bells, for they invite you to a banquet, where you are no visitant. You cannot cheer yourself with the prospect of a to-morrow's letter, for none come on Mondays. You cannot count those endless vials on the mantelpiece with any hope of making a variation in their numbers. You have counted your spiders: your Bastile is exhausted. You sit and deliberately curse your hard exile from all familiar sights and sounds. Old Ranking poking in his head unexpectedly would just now be as good to you as Grimaldi. Any thing to deliver you from this intolerable weight of Ennui. You are too ill to shake it off: not ill enough to submit to it, and to lie down as a lamb under it. The Tyranny of Sickness is nothing to the Cruelty of Convalescence: 'tis to have Thirty Tyrants for one. That pattering rain drops on your brain. You'll be worse after dinner, for you must dine at one to-day, that Betty may go to afternoon service. She insists upon having her chopped hay. And then when she goes out, who *was* something to you, something to speak to—what an interminable afternoon you'll have to go thro'. You can't break yourself from your locality: you cannot say "To-morrow morning I set off for Banstead, by God": for you are book'd for Wednesday. Foreseeing this, I thought a *cheerful letter* would come in opportunely. If any of the little topics for mirth I have thought upon should serve you in this utter extinguishment of sunshine, to make you a little merry, I shall have had my ends. I love to

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make things comfortable. [*Here is an erasure.*] This, which is scratch'd out, was the most material thing I had to say, but on maturer thoughts I defer it.

P.S.—We are just sitting down to dinner with a pleasant party, Coleridge, Reynolds the dramatist, and Sam Bloxam : to-morrow (that is, to-day), Liston, and Wyat of the Wells, dine with us. May this find you as jolly and freakish as we mean to be.

C. LAMB

VII

RURAL FELICITY

Thomas Gray tells the Rev. James Brown of chaos
and cream      

OLD PARK, *July 19, 1762*

DEAR SIR,—After my fortnight's residence at York, I am arrived here. The Precentor is very hope-fully improved in dignity. His scarf sets the fullest about his ears ; his surplice has the most the air of lawn-sleeves you can imagine in so short a time ; he begins to complain of qualms and indigestions from repose and repletion : in short, *il tranche du Prelat*. We went twice a-day to church with our vergers and all our pomp. Here the scene is totally altered : we breakfast at six in the morning, and go to bed at ten. The house rings all day with carpenters and upholsterers, and without doors we swarm with labourers and builders. The books are not yet unpacked, and there is but one pen in the house. Jetty and Fadge (two favourite sows) are always coming into the entry, and there is a concert of poultry under every window : we take in no newspaper or magazine, but the cream and butter is beyond compare. You are wished for every day, and you may imagine how acceptable a correspondent you must be. Pray write soon, and believe me ever sincerely yours, T. G.

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Thomas Gray provides Wharton with a garden
calendar ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

SATURDAY, *July 21, 1759*

DEAR DOCTOR,—I have at last found rest for the sole of my gouty foot in your old dining-room, and hope in spite of the damnation denounced by the bishop's two chaplains, that you may find at least an equal satisfaction and repose at Old Park. If your bog prove as comfortable as my oven, I shall see no occasion to pity you ; and only wish that you may *brew* no worse than I *bake*. You totally mistake my talents, when you impute to me any magical skill in planting roses. I know, I am no conjuror in these things ; when they are done, I can find no fault, and that is all. Now this is the very reverse of genius, and I feel my own littleness. Reasonable people know themselves better than is commonly imagined ; and therefore (though I never saw any instance of it) I believe Mason, when he tells me he understands planting better than anything whatever. The *prophetic eye of taste* (as Mr. Pitt call'd it) sees all the beauties that a place is susceptible of, long before they are born ; and when it plants a seedling, already sits under the shadow of it, and enjoys the effect it will have from every point of view that lies in prospect. You must, therefore, invoke Caractacus, and he will send his spirits from the top of Snowdon to Cross Fell or Warden Law.

The thermometer is in the passage window (where the sun never comes) near the head of the back stairs. Since you went, I have never observed it lower than 68, most part of the day at 74, and yesterday at 5 in the afternoon it was at 79, the highest I have ever seen it. It now is prepared to correspond regularly with you at the

Rural Felicity

hours you mention. The weather for this fortnight has been broiling without interruption, one thunder-shower excepted, which did not cool the air at all. Rye (I am told) is begun to be cut near London. In Cambridgeshire a fortnight ago the promise of harvest was the finest I ever saw, but the farmers complain (I hear) that the ears do not fill for want of wet. The wheat was then turning yellow. Duke-cherries are over in London; three days ago they sold for half-a-crown a pound. Caroons and Blackhearts very large and fine drive about the streets in wheel-barrows a penny a pound. Raspberries a few are yet remaining, but in a manner over. Melons are ripe, and apricots and Orleans-plums are to be seen in the fruit-shops. Roses are (I think) over a week ago. The jessamine (at Mrs. Dod's, on a S.W. wall) was in full bloom (if you remember) long before you went from hence, and so it continues. That below in the garden on a N.E. wall has been all this week covered in flowers. My nosegays from Covent Garden consist of nothing but scarlet martagons, everlasting-peas, double-stocks, pinks and flowering marjoram. As I have kept no exact account hitherto this year, I can say no more of July, that now is. Therefore, I shall annex one for the year 1754, which I observed day by day at Stoke. Observe, it had been then a cold rainy summer.

The heat was very moderate this month, and a great deal of rain fell. The sown hay was all got in by the first day, but the meadow-hay was not before the 23rd. It was very good and in plenty, but sold at 40 shillings a load in the field on account of the scarcity the year preceding. Barley was in the ear on the first day; grey and white peas in bloom. The bean flowers were going off. Duke-cherries in plenty on the 5th; hearts were also ripe. Green melons on the 6th, but watry and not

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sweet. Currants begun to ripen on the 8th, and red gooseberries had changed colour ; tares were then in flower, and meadow-hay cutting. Lime-trees in full bloom on the 9th. Mushroom in perfection on the 17th. Wheat and oats had changed colour, and buck-wheat was in bloom on the 19th. The vine had then opened its blossoms, and the end of the month grapes were near the size of small peas. Turnips appeared above ground on the 22nd ; and potatoes were in flower. Barley had changed its hue, and rye was almost ripe on the 23rd. The pineapple-strawberry was then in perfection. Black caroons were ripe, and some duke-cherries still remained on walls the 26th, but the hearts were then all spoiled by rain. Gooseberries red and white were then ripe, and currants in abundance.

On the 1st

Haws, turned red
Honey-suckles, in full bloom
Broomflower went off

On the 2nd

Phlomis, or yellow-tree-sage

On the 3rd

Virginia flowering Raspberry,
blew
Shrub cinque-foil
Spiræa-frutex
Syringa went off

On the 7th

Balm of Gilead blowing

On the 8th

Common Jasmine blew
Moss-Provence Rose
Yellow and Austrian Roses go off

On the 9th

Yellow Jasmine blows
White, and Gum Cistus
Tamarisk in flower
Coccygia
Virginia-Sumach
Tutsan, or Park-leaves
Spanish-Broom
Scarlet, and painted Geraniums

On the 11th

Pyracantha, in berry
Mountain-Ash
White-Beam
Orange flowering
Winter Cherry

On the 15th

Single Velvet Rose goes off

On the 22nd

Lavender and Morjoram blow

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On the 26th

Damask, red, moss, and double
Velvet, Roses go off

On the 28th

Rosa-Mundi, and Rose without
Thorns, go off

On the 31st

White Rose goes off

These were all the flowering
Shrubs observed by me

GARDEN FLOWERS

On the 2nd

Convolvus Minor blows
Garden Poppy
Single Rose Campion
Double Larkspur
Candy Tuft
Common Marigold
Pansies continue blowing

On the 5th

Lupins blew, and white blow
Purple Toads-flax
White, and blue Campanula

On the 9th

Double-scarlet Lychnis blows
Tree Primrose
White Lilly
Willow-Bay
Scarlet Bean
French Marigold

On the 11th

Yellow Lupin blows
Tree-Mallow
Amaranthus Cat's-tail

On the 19th

Striped Lilly blows
Fairchild's Mule
Double rose-Campion
African Ragwort

On the 23rd

Whole Carnations blow

On the 24th

Double-white Stock in bloom

In the Fields Scabious, St.
John's Wort, Trefoil, Yarrow,
Bugloss, Purple Vetch, Wild-
thyme, Pale Wood - Orchis,
Betony, and white Clover, flower-
ing on the 1st. Large blue
Cranesbill the 9th; Ragwort,
Mothmullein, and Brambles, the
20th; Knapweed all the month.
There was rain (more or less)
13 days out of 31, this month;
and 17 days out of 30 in June
preceding

I was too late for the post on Saturday, so I continue on Monday. It is now 6 in the afternoon, and the thermometer is mounted to 80, though the wind is at N.E. by N. The gay Lady Essex is dead of a fever during her lying-in; and Mrs. Charles York last week,

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with one of her children, of the sore throat. Heberden, and (I think) Taylor, attended her; the latter had pronounced her out of danger; but Heberden doubted her. The little boy was at Acton, and escaped the infection.

Everybody continues as quiet about the invasion, as if a Frenchman, as soon as he set his foot on our coast, would die, like a toad in Ireland. Yet the king's tents and equipage are ordered to be ready at an hour's warning. Nobody knows, positively, what is the damage that Rodney has done, whether much or little: he can only guess himself; and the French have kept their own secret, as yet. Of the 12 millions, raised for the year, eight are gone already, and the old party assure us, there is no more to be had for next year. You may easily guess at the source of my intelligence, and therefore will not talk of it. News is hourly expected of a battle in Westphalia, for Pr. Ferdinand was certainly preparing to fight the French, who have taken Minden by storm.

I hear the D. of N. is much broke ever since his sister Castlecomer died: not that he cared for her, or saw her above once a year; but she was the last of the brood, that was left; and he now goes regularly to church, which he never did before. Adieu. I am ever yours.

I hope Mrs. Wharton's native air will be more civil to her, when they are better acquainted: my best compliments to her. I am glad the children are well.

Rural Felicity

William Cowper records his history as a gardener 

(To Mrs. King)

WESTON UNDERWOOD

October 11, 1788

MY DEAR MADAM,—You are perfectly secure from all danger of being overwhelmed with presents from me.

It is not much that a poet can possibly have it in his power to give. When he has presented his own works, he may be supposed to have exhausted all means of donation.

They are his only superfluity.

There was a time, but that time was before I commenced writer for the press, when I amused myself in a way somewhat similar to yours; allowing, I mean, for the difference between masculine and feminine operations.

The scissors and the needle are your chief implements; mine were the chisel and the saw.

In those days you might have been in some danger of too plentiful a return for your favours. Tables, such as they were, and joint stools such as never were, might have travelled to Pertenhall in most inconvenient abundance.

But I have long since discontinued this practice, and many others which I found it necessary to adopt, that I might escape the worst of all evils, both in itself and in its consequences—an idle life.

Many arts I have exercised with this view, for which nature never designed me, though among them were some in which I arrived at considerable proficiency, by mere dint of the most heroic perseverance. There is not a 'squire in all this country who can boast of having made better

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squirrel-houses, hutches for rabbits, or bird-cages, than myself : and in the article of cabbage-nets, I had no superior. I even had the hardiness to take in hand the pencil, and studied a whole year the art of drawing. Many figures were the fruit of my labours, which had the merit, at least, of being unparalleled by any production either of art or nature. But before the year was ended, I had occasion to wonder at the progress that may be made, in spite of natural deficiency, by dint alone of practice, for I actually produced three landscapes which a lady thought worthy to be framed and glazed. I then judged it high time to exchange this occupation, lest, by any subsequent productions of inferior merit I should forfeit the honour I had so fortunately acquired.

But gardening was, of all employments, that in which I succeeded best ; though even in this I did not suddenly attain perfection.

I began with lettuces and cauliflowers ; from them I proceeded to cucumbers ; next to melons.

I then purchased an orange tree, to which, in due time I added two or three myrtles. These served me day and night for employment during a whole severe winter. To defend them from the frost, in a situation that exposed them to its severity, cost me much ingenuity, and much attendance.

I contrived to give them a fire heat ; and have waded night after night through the snow, with the bellows under my arm, just before going to bed, to give the latest possible puff to the embers, lest the frost should seize them before morning. Very minute beginnings have sometimes important consequences.

From nursing two or three little evergreens, I became ambitious of a greenhouse, and accordingly built one, which, verse excepted, afforded me amusement for a

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longer time than any expedient of all the many to which I have fled for refuge from the misery of having nothing to do.

When I left Olney for Weston, I could no longer have a greenhouse of my own ; but in a neighbour's garden I find a better of which the sole management is consigned to me.

I had need take care, when I begin a letter, that the subject with which I set off be of some importance ; for before I can exhaust it, be it what it may, I have generally filled my paper. But self is a subject inexhaustible, which is the reason that though I have said little or nothing, I am afraid, worth your hearing, I have only room to add, that I am, my dear Madam, most truly yours,

W. C.

Mrs. Unwin bids me present her best compliments, and say how much she shall be obliged to you for the receipt to make that most excellent cake which came hither in its native pan. There is no production of yours that will not be always most welcome at Weston.

Edward Gibbon meditates farming ♪ ♪ ♪

October 6, 1771

DEAR HOLROYD,—I sit down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride.—A ride ! and upon what?—upon a horse.

You lie !—I don't.—I have got a droll little poney, and intend to renew the long-forgotten practice of equitation, as it was known in the world before the second of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three.

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As I used to reason against riding so I can now argue for it ; and indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm that I am of no use here? Farmer Gibbon of no use?

Last week I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man.

Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill fair, but that would have been an additional expense, and a great uncertainty.

Our quantity has disappointed us very much ; but I think, that besides hops for the family, there will be not less than 500 l. ;—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only.

This week I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from 25 l. to 35 l. *per annum* :—and Farmer Gibbon of no use !

To be serious : I have but one reason for resisting your invitation and my own wishes ; that is, I left Mrs. Gibbon alone nearly all last winter, and shall do the same this.

She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude ; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present.

I know you so well, that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason ; and let me make my next visit to Sheffield-Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas.

I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour into Bucks.—Adieu.

Rural Felicity

The Rev. Laurence Sterne describes his happiness at
Coxwould ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

COXWOULD, *June 7, 1767*

DEAR L—E,—I had not been many days at this peaceful cottage before your letter greeted me with the seal of friendship, and most cordially do I thank you for so kind a proof of your good will—I was truly thankful to hear of the recovery of my sentimental friend—but I would not write to enquire after her, unless I could have sent her the testimony without the tax, for even howd'yes to invalids, or those who have lately been so, either call to mind what is past or what may return—at least I find it so.

I am as happy as a prince at Coxwould—and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live—'tis a land of plenty ; I sit down alone to venison, fish, wild-fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds and strawberries and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley (under Hamilton Hills) can produce—with a clean cloth on my table—and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard—and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me.

If solitude would cure a love-sick heart, I would give you an invitation—but absence and time lessen no attachment which virtue inspires.

I am in high spirits—care never enters this cottage—I take the air every day in my post-chaise, with two long-tailed horses—they turn out good ones ; and as to myself, I think I am better on the whole for the medicines and regimen I submitted in town.

May you, dear L—, want neither the one nor the other !—Yours truly.

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Gilbert White on all the finches of the grove

(To Thomas Pennant)

SELBORNE, *September 2, 1774*

DEAR SIR,—Before your letter arrived, and of my own accord, I had been remarking and comparing the tails of the male and female swallow, and this ere any young broods appeared, so that there was no danger of confounding the dames with their *pulli*; and besides, as they were then always in pairs, and busied in the employ of nidification, there could be no room for mistaking the sexes, nor the individuals of different chimneys the one for the other. From all my observations, it constantly appeared that each sex has the long feathers in its tail that give it that forked shape, with this difference, that they are longer in the tail of the male than in that of the female.

Nightingales, when their young first come abroad, and are helpless, make a plaintive and a jarring noise, and also a snapping or cracking, pursuing people along the hedges as they walk: these last sounds seem intended for menace and defiance.

The grasshopper-lark chirps all night in the height of summer.

Swans turn white the second year, and breed the third.

Weasels prey on moles, as appears by their being sometimes caught in mole-traps.

Sparrow-hawks sometimes breed in old crows' nests, and the kestrel in churches and ruins.

There are supposed to be two sorts of eels in the island of Ely. The threads sometimes discovered in eels are their young: the generation of eels is very dark and mysterious.

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Hen-harriers breed in the ground, and seem never to settle on trees.

When redstars shake their tails they move them horizontally, as dogs do when they fawn ; the tail of a wagtail when in motion bobs up and down like that of a jaded horse.

Hedge-sparrows have a remarkable flirt with their wings in breeding-time ; as soon as frosty mornings come they make a very piping plaintive noise.

Many birds which become silent about midsummer reassume their notes again in September, as the thrush, the blackbird, woodlark, willow-wren, etc. ; hence August is by much the most mute month the spring, summer, and autumn through. Are birds induced to sing because the temperament of autumn resembles that of spring ?

Linnæus ranges plants geographically ; palms inhabit the tropics, grasses the temperate zones, and mosses lichens the polar circles ; no doubt animals may be classed in the same manner with propriety.

House-sparrows build under the eaves in the spring ; as the weather becomes hotter they set out for coolness and rest in plum trees and apple trees. These birds have been known sometimes to build in rooks' nests and sometimes in the forks of boughs under rooks' nests.

As my neighbour was housing a rick, he observed that his dogs devoured all the little red-mice ; and his cats ate the common mice, refusing the red.

Red-breasts sing all through the spring, summer, and autumn. The reason that they are called autumn songsters is, because in the two first seasons their voices are drowned and lost in the general chorus ; in the latter their song becomes distinguishable. Many songsters of the autumn seem to be the young cock red-

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breasts of that year ; notwithstanding the prejudices in their favour, they do much mischief in gardens to the summer fruits.

The titmouse, which early in February begins to make the quaint notes, like the whetting of a saw, is the marsh titmouse : the great titmouse sings with three cheerful joyous notes, and begins about the same time.

Wrens sing all the winter through, frost excepted.

House-martins came remarkably late this year, both in Hampshire and Devonshire : is this circumstance for or against either hiding or migration ? Most birds drink sipping at intervals ; but pigeons take a long continued draught, like quadrupeds.

Notwithstanding what I have said in a former letter, no grey crows were ever known to breed on Dartmoor ; it was my mistake.

The appearance and flying of the *Scarabæus solstitialis*, or fern-chafer, commence with the month of July, and cease about the end of it. These scarabs are the constant food of *Caprimilgi*, or fern-owls, through that period. They abound on the chalky downs and in some sandy districts, but not in the clays.

In the garden of the Black Bear Inn in the town of Reading, is a stream or canal running under the stables and out into the fields on the other side of the road ; in this water are many carp, which lie rolling about in sight, being fed by travellers, who amuse themselves by tossing them bread ; but as soon as the weather grows at all severe, these fishes are no longer seen, because they retire under the stables, where they remain till the return of spring. Do they lie in a torpid state ? If they do not, how are they supported ?

The note of the white-throat, which is continually re-

Rural Felicity

peated, and often attended with odd gesticulation on the wing, is harsh and displeasing. These birds seem of a pugnacious disposition ; for they sing with an erected crest and attitudes of rivalry and defiance ; are shy and wild in breeding time, avoiding neighbourhoods and haunting lonely lanes and commons ; nay, even the very tops of the Sussex downs, where are bushes and coverts ; but in July and August they bring their broods into gardens and orchards, and make great havoc among the summer fruits.

The black-cap has in common a full, sweet, deep, loud, and wild pipe ; yet that strain is of short continuance, and his motions are desultory ; but when that bird sits calmly and engages in song in earnest, he pours forth very sweet but inward melody, and expresses great variety of soft and gentle modulations ; superior perhaps to those of any of our warblers, the nightingale excepted.

Black-caps mostly haunt orchards and gardens ; while they warble their throats are wonderfully distended.

The song of the redstart is superior, though somewhat like that of the white-throat ; some birds have a few more notes than others. Sitting very placidly on the top of a tall tree in a village, the cock sings from morning till night : he affects neighbourhoods, and avoids solitude, and loves to build in orchards and about houses ; with us he perches on the vane of a tall may-pole.

The fly-catcher is of all our summer birds the most mute and the most familiar ; it also appears the last of any. It builds in a vine, or a sweet briar, against the wall of a house, or in the hole of a wall, or in the end of a beam or plate, and often close to the post of a door where people are going in and out all day long. This bird does not make the least pretension to song, but uses a little inward wailing note when it thinks its young in

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danger from cats or other annoyances ; it breeds but once, and returns early.

Selborne parish alone can and has exhibited at times more than half the birds that are ever seen in all Sweden ; the former has produced more than one hundred and twenty species, the latter only two hundred and twenty one. Let me add also that it has shown near half the species that were ever known in Great Britain.

On a retrospect, I observe that my long letter carries with it a quaint and magisterial air, and is very sententious ; but when I recollect that you requested stricture and anecdote, I hope you will pardon the didactic manner for the sake of the information it may happen to contain.

Charles James Fox instructs Mr. Gray as to the note of the nightingale ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

DEAR GRAY,—In defence of my opinion about the nightingales, I find Chaucer, who of all poets seems to have been the fondest of the singing of birds, calls it a *merry* note ; and though Theocritus mentions nightingales six or seven times, he never mentions their note as plaintive or melancholy. It is true, he does not call it anywhere merry, as Chaucer does ; but by mentioning it with the song of the blackbird, and as answering it, he seems to imply that it was a cheerful note.

Sophocles is against us, but even *he* says, "*lamenting Itys*," and the comparison of her to Electra is rather as to perseverance day and night, than as to sorrow. At all events, a tragic poet is not half so good authority on this question as Theocritus and Chaucer. I cannot light upon the passage in the Odyssey where Penelope's rest-

Rural Felicity

lessness is compared to the nightingale ; but I am sure you will be paid for your hunt, whether you find it or not. The passage in Chaucer is in "Flower and Leaf," page 99. The one I particularly allude to in Theocritus is in his *Epigrams*, I think in the fourth. Dryden has transferred the word *merry* to the gold finch in the "Flower and the Leaf," in deference, may be, to his vulgar error ; but pray read his description of the nightingale there : it is quite delightful. I am afraid that I like those researches as much better than those that relate to Shaftesbury, Sunderland, etc., as I do those better than attending the House of Commons,—Yours affectionately,

C. J. Fox

William Blake and his wife try to lure the Flaxmans
to Sussex ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

HERCULES BUILDINGS, LAMBETH

September 14, 1800

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—I hope you will not think [we] could forget your services to us, or anyway neglect to love and remember with affection even the hem of your garment.

We indeed presume on your kindness in neglecting to have called upon you since my husband's first return from Felpham.

We have been incessantly busy in our great removal ; but can never think of going without first paying our proper duty to you and Mr. Flaxman.

We intend to call on Sunday afternoon in Hampstead, to take farewell ; all things being now nearly completed for our setting forth on Tuesday morning.

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It is only sixty miles, and Lambeth one hundred, for the terrible desert of London was between.

My husband has been obliged to finish several things necessary to be finished before our migration. The swallows call us, fleeting past our window at this moment.

Oh! how we delight in talking of the pleasure we shall have in preparing you a summer bower at Felpham. And we not only talk, but behold! the angels of our journey have inspired a song to you:—

TO MY DEAR FRIEND, MRS. ANNA FLAXMAN

This song to the flower of Flaxman's joy;
To the blossom of hope, for a sweet decoy;
Do all that you can, and all that you may,
To entice him to Felpham and far away.

Away to sweet Felpham, for Heaven is there;
The Ladder of Angels descends through the air;
On the Turret its spiral does softly descend
Through the village then winds, at my cot it does end.

You stand in the village and look up to Heaven;
The precious stones glitter on flights seventy-seven;
And my brother is there, and my Friend and Thine,
Descend and ascend with the Bread and the Wine.

The Bread of sweet thought and the Wine of delight
Feed the village of Felpham by day and by night;
And at his own door the bless'd hermit does stand,
Dispensing, unceasing, to all the wide land.

W. BLAKE

Receive my and my husband's love and affection, and
believe me to be yours affectionately,

CATHERINE BLAKE

VIII

A LICHFIELD CHAPLET

Four Letters of Miss Seward



I

(To Mrs. Mompessan)

LICHFIELD, *June 14, 1791*

DID I not manage my mind right stoically, not to touch upon any thing in the shape of an adieu? Was it not, camelion-like, to take the colour of your inclinations, who, I know, love to reserve your embraces for the hour of meeting? Never can I forget how warm those embraces were, when, in the dusk of a vernal evening, I entered your mansion, so embowered and so pleasant, after an absence of almost countless years. Never can I forget the month that glided so swiftly away amid your lovely glades, and in your thrice-dear society. Once more let me thank you for the sweetness and lustre of those recorded days.

As to the sultry morning of our separation, I have not, through life, been so sensible of climatic violence. The white and cloudless concave smote upon us with fiery severity, and clouds of choking dust rose incessantly around us.

But Mrs. Hayley received me with animated gladness,

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encompassed with youths of genius—the rising hopes of Derby. They walked with us into Mr. H.'s garden, and returned home with us to supper. Next morning we had levees in succession ; half the smart people of that town, interspersed with the militia officers. We past the afternoon and evening at Dr. Darwin's, though he, who unites in himself what Johnson said of James and Garrick, viz. "he who lengthened, and he who gladdened life," the great physician and exquisite poet, was called thirty miles another way, in the exercise of his first power. Mrs. Darwin had an immense party to meet us, for whose apprehended amusement she engaged me, by earnest solicitations, to repeat odes and sonnets. If they were not egregious flatterers, the pleasure the company expressed made it impossible to grudge the exertion, even beneath a sky so torrid.

The next morning we paid some of our visits ; and in the evening Mrs. Hayley had more than twenty friends to tea and supper : amongst them a gentleman who, on the instant of his being introduced, impressed my mind with a sentiment in his favour, more passionately tender than I had ever felt for any man on the first interview,

"Even in the heyday of impetuous youth,
The spring of life, the bloom of gaudy years."

It was so tender as to force the tears in rivers down my cheeks, during the first half-hour in which he talked to me.

And now, lest your rigid decorum should induce you to censure, without mercy, emotions, at once so rapid and ungovernable, I must whisper to you the age of their inspirer ; he is ninety-one—my father's old friend, Mr. Ashby, who preserves, at so late a period, his intellects and sensibility in wonderful power, and with the most attentive politeness ; but the sunk mouth of extreme

A Lichfield Chaplet

old age, the glazed eye, the hesitating feebleness of accent, the cold clammy hand that pressed mine with affectionate earnestness, all contributed to produce a resemblance to my poor father, so striking as to occasion those emotions I mentioned. He inquired after generations at Lichfield, long passed away, who were his contemporaries, and with whose names my mother had, in childhood, familiarized me, though they had then ceased to exist. He told me that he had often had my mother on his knee, the most beautiful infant of three years old, he said, he ever beheld.

You will imagine how interesting all this to me, who look back upon the years that are fled with all the enthusiasm, though not with the science, of an antiquarian ; yet, however interested, gratified, and amused, by the politeness, vivacity, and intelligence of the Derby gentlemen and ladies, I found the heats dreadfully oppressive. Mrs. Hayley's tea-room, and the bed-chamber I occupied, are full west. Accustomed to slumber amidst the profoundest silence, and unable, through the sultriness, to shut down my sashes, the street-noises, excessive and incessant, kept me awake two whole nights. I felt the torture of being startled into wakefulness every time the balmy power weighed down my eyelids, and thought of the denunciation against Macbeth. I was never more sensible of its force, and of the misery of being forbid to taste the "chief nourishment at life's feast,"

"Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's woe, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds!"

The stock of health I had acquired in your peaceful village began to vanish fast beneath such fatigue. I

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sighed for the cool book-room—the hermitage—the shaded lawns and gurgling waters of Woodhouse.

It was with the utmost difficulty that I could retain my purpose of going to Burton, so pressing were the solicitations, on all hands, to prolong my stay in a town whose inhabitants had proved so long pleasant to me—but I did keep my appointment with my friend Mrs. Dalrymple, and arrived at Burton by nine in the evening. Four days passed agreeably away in that visit, except that, during one of them, Mrs. D. was seized with a violent stomach and bowel complaint, but it went off the next day, and I had the satisfaction of leaving her perfectly recovered. It was then that I could jestingly tell her she fell ill on purpose to show off her husband's tender attention, more animated and incessant than I had ever observed in the creation's lords to sick wives. So she sent me home half-inclined to bewail my virginity like Jephtha's daughter.

This good couple long to be acquainted with you, and you would like them. She has intelligence, cheerfulness, and droll humour, in which you so much delight—he has sense, worth, and character, resulting from pleasant oddity and shrewd simplicity of accent and language. You would like him some degrees superadded to your esteem for his good qualities, when you shall know that he lost an estate of 1500*l.* per annum, by his uncle Colonel Dalrymple's attachment to the fallen house of Stuart, in the year 1745. Mr. and Mrs. D. wish you to pass a day or two with them in some of your journies through Burton, and I wish you would so far oblige and indulge them.

I came home late on Sunday night, and the next morning found the cathedral bowers and lawns in full bloom and beauty, with the addition of four more houses round

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the area being white-roughcast. It is now completely the milky way, a white zone round the verdant lawn sweetly contrasting the lavish foliage of the scene.

As yet I have seen few of its inhabitants, except dear Lady Gresley and her engaging daughters, and old Mr. Green, to whom I made a point of carrying your good wishes yesterday. That benevolent and industrious collector of antique curiosities breaks fast :

“ His lamp of life is almost spent and done.”

Lichfield, or rather the strangers who visit her, will have a great loss if his museum should not survive him, or not be shewn *con amore*, when he shall no longer be found amidst the vestiges of former days. Your kind message cheered his drooping spirits, and he blessed you with moist eyes.

You remember my observing to you how much our language had become, even in common conversation, Latinized, since Dr. Johnson's writings were familiar to people, and since his fine style had been so generally adopted by ingenious writers. I heard some ladies at Burton, who neither have, nor pretend to, bookish knowledge, use the following words with prompt spontaneity in conversing on common topics, viz. “ literature, literary, hilarity, stipulate, excruciating, delusive, juvenile, temerity, contemporary, phenomenon, popular, conservatory,” etc. etc. Twenty years ago, scarce one of those words would have been understood, much less used by the generality of private gentlewomen. I like this growing Latinity—it rids us of a number of those hissing *s*'s that deform our language, which becomes more harmonious and full for their dismissal. Adieu, my dear friend !

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II

(To Mrs. Adey)

BUXTON, *June 14, 1793*

I AM invoking the Naiads of these warm soft springs, to wash away the dregs of that obscure and long disease, which, assuming various forms, has oppressed me since the birth-day of this year. There was reason to hope, that bathing and drinking the waters would have been of great use ; but, lo ! a violent cold now shivers through my veins. The weather is perverse. After a long drought, and cloudless horizon, no sooner came luckless I, than loud and keen blew the north, and rainy clouds drew their dark trains over the mountains. If this hoarse soreness on my lungs should settle into one of my fierce hereditary coughs, the prospect of the north coast will vanish from my purposes, and I shall shrink back home to quiet and domestic nursing.

Though, as yet, the young gay crowds do not swarm through our golden Crescent, hitherto have my hours passed pleasantly in musical parties, and in little conversations of intelligence and interest. I am under the same roof with amiable and lovely Mrs. Sedley, and dear Mrs. Greaves, of our little city. Except the latter, I did not, on my first arrival, personally know a single being of those various groups that inhabit the Crescent, or resort to it in preference to the less splendid dwellings of olden time. My next favourite after sweet Mrs. Sedley, among these stranger tribes, is Lady Clerk, from the environs of Edinburgh. She is here, with her laughter-loving husband, who very shrewdly knows life and manners, and the rudiments of many sciences ; who plays slow Scotch airs on the violin with the skill of a

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professor, and the pathos of a lover. Sir John Clerk seems to idolize his lady, who is still very handsome, though no longer a girl. Her figure verges to *en bon point*; but her step, her air, her address, are spirited and graceful; and her conversation is frank, interesting, and gay. Her apartments attract the ingenious and polite of both sexes; and if her parties are not large, they are select.

And Miss Delabere, the engaging sister of my beloved Mrs. Granville, I was delighted to find here. Though personally strangers, we knew much of each other. Fast-fading health was the motive of her journey. The paleness of her cheek, the languor of her step, are rendered pleasing by that pensive sweetness of smile, that touching softness of voice, which are often more conciliating than even the warm glow of independent health, and render even defect lovely.

Sir John E——'s daughters were, on my first arrival, the belles of the scene. The eldest is strikingly handsome, with an air of dignity and fashion, and, as she passes, irresistibly attracts the eye. I had no acquaintance with these nymphs, nor desired it. They have an assured and repulsive haughtiness of look and step, which, though not incompatible with grace, destroys all its interest.—

“The toss of quality, and high-bred fleer.”

They soon left us; and to their claim of handsomest, amid a dearth of beauty, succeeded the two Miss C——s, accompanying their portly, handsome, though gouty, father; a very shy country gentleman, who says little, and has but one theme, viz. the hereditary powers and beauties of horn-cattle. His second daughter is most admired; tall and well-shaped; a brunette complexion

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of high bloom ; dark large round eyes ; the full lips and aquiline nose of the Cæsarian medals. Her sister has the same features, upon a less scale ; but has neither the height nor bloom of the younger, who possesses a most uncommon talent for mechanics. She builds little coaches, chaises, and phaetons, which are said to be perfect models ; and has no assistance in making the wheels, the windows, or any other part. These young ladies are unaffected ; but neither in their persons, their countenance, or manner, is there an atom of grace or expression ; and they extremely want that obliging vivacity, which is at once so natural and so lovely in youth.

When I left home, Mrs. Cobb was in somewhat better health, and her intellects clearer than they had been some time. Miss Adey is in robust vigour of frame, and has every prospect of longevity ; but there is no rational dependence upon these vital perspectives.

This is my native country, and I gaze, with thrills of filial tenderness, even on these wild and barren hills. Tell your beloved Mr. Adey, that I purpose going next week to Eyam, the village of my birth, the home of my early infancy ; and whither I often used to accompany my father on his summer residences there. I cannot resist the desire of indulging this mournful luxury, in a scene which bears such striking traces of the dear and for ever lost. There is more scenic beauty and cultivated umbrage round Eyam than amidst those naked and monotonous mountains.

Mr. Adey's affectionate heart feels the force of local impressions on every seldom visit to his native Lichfield, and will sympathize with me in the sensations that induce this little excursion.

I congratulate you on the public virtue of your favourite

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friend, Mr. Windham. His talents have been long distinguished ; and he has now proved his patriotism sincere, by preferring the welfare of his country to private friendship and party influence. Adieu !

III

(To Mrs. Mompessan)

BRIDLINGTON QUAY, YORKSHIRE

August 15, 1793

THAT you have been so ill, dear friend, I am sorry, but comforted that, writing in a state of convalescence, your disease is amongst the number of past evils, for which concern rises in our bosom, "shorn of its stings."

This long excursion has afforded me many pleasures, besides having, as I hope, contributed to the restoration of my health. At Buxton, I formed a friendship with excellent Mrs. Sedley, which the resistless dissembler of human wishes has most unexpectedly nipt in its first interesting expansion.—On my road to the North coast, after travelling through long tracks of brown and thistly sterility, scenes of the highest and most ornamented cultivation rose to my eye, on the banks of the majestic Humber, which is there several miles broad ; and it seemed a drive of several miles through a gay garden, the pleasure-grounds of each elegant and thick-sown villa extending from one to another. I dined with my dear and old friend Mrs. Collins, whose virtues glow, and whose intellectual lights burn brightly as your own, in despite of the snows which time has shed upon your mutual foreheads.

In the evening, I proceeded where, four miles farther,

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the known woods and lawns of Westella, haunts of my youth, adorn the banks of that flood of liquid silver, which rolls in their view. I was received with animated and cordial welcome ; its glow seemed proportioned to the length of our separation. My valued friends were become venerable, with the children of those sons playing round their knees, who were themselves scarce more than children on my last visit to that dear scene. It is on returning to a place, after a very long absence, that we scarcely credit our eyes, when they show us a new generation rising up in the interim. The intervening space is annihilated, by the strong impression we retain of the living objects we had left there, and by the sameness of the local ones.

I found good and generous Mrs. Sykes slowly recovering from a dangerous and long illness, and her engaging and accomplished daughter feeble and languid, by the long pressure of filial anxieties and exertions, upon a very delicate constitution. They obligingly offered to accompany me to Bridlington, but were too unwell to encounter the company and hurries of Scarborough. My promise to Mr. Dewes interfering, we agreed, that if he and his party left that coast before my aqueous discipline was performed, as to duration, I should complete it on this less splendid shore, where they agreed to meet me. . . .

Hither I came on the 5th instant, Mr. and Mrs. Sykes having arrived a few hours before me. Two agreeable young ladies of their intimacy, Miss Horners of Hull, joined us the ensuing day. Thus are we a party of five in the same lodgings, and on the edge of the vast German Ocean ; we inhale its saline gales, and hope they will be salubrious. As yet I have only been able to bathe twice, so angrily turbulent have I found *ma*

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mère. A boarded pier, one hundred and twenty yards in length, and on which nine people may walk abreast, juts out into her bosom, not fifty paces from us, and balances all the other superiorities of Scarborough. The sea-sands are always either too wet or too heavy for comfortable walking,—but this pier forms an admirable public walk. There all the company of the place resort,—and there the ocean gales rise on all sides around us, freely as we could taste them in a boat. Here we walk or sit, very often in the day, frequently when the huge billows are raging and lashing the pier on every side.

Several families of consequence are at this place, with whom, being known to Mrs. Sykes, we exchange morning visits. In the evenings I generally read aloud, while the rest work.

Pretty Mrs. John Gisbon is of the number, with her boyish-looking, but highly intelligent husband. They were so good to take me yesterday in their coach an airing on the edges of the cliffs.—The finest and mildest sun shed his brilliants in the mighty waters, on which all the winds lay asleep. When the horses turned homewards, we descended to the sands, and observed the pretty grey and white seagulls taking their noon-meal of shrimps on the edges of the waves, that but just purled up the shore. The vast sea was of a bright blueish-green, verifying Ossian's description, when he says, "the blue waves of Ullin rolled in light."

But, O! the delusive smiles of that capricious element! In the afternoon, the wind rising and blowing east, the billows began to chafe and foam. Their rage increased as the evening came on, and then it was that "the waters grew dark as they rose." It was the spring-tides, and they surged to the shore with a prodigious and turbulent flood.

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Mr. Daniel Sykes joined our party, since I began this letter some days ago, by engagements prevented from finishing it sooner. This young gentleman and myself have not met since his school-days. In the beauty of his face, and the polish of his address, he rises, to my observation, the flower of the Westella house. All its sons have merit, one of them has genius and wit, but he only has the graces ; nor exist they alone, or with a frivolous mind, but are the fascinating ornaments of distinguished talents and generous worth.

So the bloody Marat is fallen by female heroism, and the Generals Custine and Miranda are condemned, with the legislator Brissot ! Thus it is, that the godless and lawless republic, like Sin, makes the wages of his servants death. Adieu.

IV

(To David Somervell, Esq.)

LICHFIELD, *March 17, 1795*

IT flatters me that you like my little poem on Hoyle lake. I have really not exaggerated the mild *agréments* of the scene. The handsome hotel, built since you saw it, the little appendant white cottages, scattered around, to supply it with milk, butter, etc., diffuse an air of cheerful and social comfort, where you saw only barren and lonely downs. The rich and varied scenery on the Flintshire coast, rising from the waters of the Dee, form, when the azure mirror is full, a soft and marine landscape, recompensing the beautiful absence of rocky grandeur, and the terrific grace of oceanic sublimity.

Your account of the Shakespearean discovery is very interesting—but my faith is not implicit. The absence of the indecent passages in the copy of *Lear*, looks

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suspicious. Obscene wit occurs so often in his other plays, and in *Lear* it is of such biting shrewdness, that, however responsible in inclination the performer might be to foist in passages of that nature, the infinite satiric wit of those which are scattered through that play, proclaim their genuine descent, "trumpet-tongued."

The internal evidence which the Vortigern must supply, either for or against the originality of these productions, will, in time, by the accumulating suffrages of those who are competent to judge and decide upon poetic claims, either sink them in oblivion, or gather them to the treasures left us by that great master.

If the business should be surreptitious; he is a bold man who attempts to shoot in the strong bow of our own Ulysses. I believe there is one, and only one existing, who has the power of exciting doubt, if not faith, in the discriminating, by an effort so arduous.

That man is Jephson. His bold and figurative style in *Narbon*, and in the *Law of Lombardy*, resembles Shakespeare extremely:—not servilely, but with freedom, strength, and happiness. The little notice which has been taken of those plays, compared with their true claims to distinction, convince me that if Shakespeare had lived and written in these days, his fame and himself had not been contemporaries.

With your censure of a line in that fine ode of Gray's, on the installation of the Duke of Grafton at Cambridge, I do not quite accord. In this the concluding stanza—

"Through the wild waves, as they roar,
With watchful eye, and dauntless mien,
Thy steady cause of honour keep;
Nor fear the rocks nor dread the shore,
The star of Brunswick smiles serene
And gilds the horrors of the deep."

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You say that, without an effort of memory, you never could recollect the second line of that stanza, and have at length discovered that it is the author's fault, being a superfluous line, and the sense of the passage complete without it. I confess the sense of the passage complete without that parenthetic line, but it appears to me of vital essentiality to the picture. Excluding it, there remains, it is true, a clear allusion to an able mariner combating maritime dangers, but no distinct image. In that second line, the magic of the poetic wand instantly transforms the minister of state into the skilful and intrepid naval commander, standing firm on the deck, and eluding, "with watchful eye, and dauntless mien," the fury of the tempest : while it changes our monarch into the polar-star, discovering the rocks, and shining a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. There is happy, and I think Horatian spirit, in your ode written on the northern cruise. The address to the moon is beautiful,—particularly in the manner of Horace.

Mischiefs, many and various, descend upon our Island—a relentless winter, with its long frosts and resistless floods, has augmented the miseries of a rash and ill-managed war, and almost destroyed the verisimilitude of one feature in Johnson's beautiful picture of our unhappy country, the blessings of which seem to transcend the faith of his Greenlander : "We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which your stanzas so wantonly describe, where the whole year is divided into short days and nights ; where its inhabitants may pass from one extremity of the land to another, through ways inclosed with trees, and over walls raised upon the inland waters."

Our young prince comes to us at an inauspicious period. Since her royal lover so long declined the hymeneal chain, he had better have waited till the lilies and olives

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of peace might enwreath it. O! that our rulers would endeavour to procure them for the insignia of British sway, rather than those ensanguined laurels, which, now so evidently placed beyond its reach—stamp the continuation of this desperate struggle to obtain them, with very criminal rashness, and with folly that amounts to infatuation. It is time, it has long been time, to take care of our existence as an independent nation. As for the enslaving, the tyrannous, the murderous, the blasphemous anarchists—Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it.

How stood your health the seldom-paralleled severity of last winter? the long frost and its undulating dissolution?

“What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Derived, thou secret, all-invading power,
Which e’en th’ illusive flood cannot fly?”

Do you admire the charming poet who asks that question in his *Seasons*?—Thomson! great painter of nature, this art of all hours.

Dropping eyelids reproach my pen for having invaded the homes of rest. It stands corrected, and bids you farewell!

IX

OUR VILLAGE RECEIVES THE NEWS

I

(B. R. Haydon to Miss Mitford)

EDINBURGH, *December 5, 1820*

I DINED with Walter Scott, and was delighted with the unaffected simplicity of his family. Jeffrey has a singular expression, poignant, bitter, piercing—as if his countenance never lighted up but at the perception of some weakness in human nature. Whatever you praise to Jeffrey, he directly chuckles out some error that you did not perceive. Whatever you praise to Scott, he joins heartily with yourself, and directs your attention to some additional beauty. Scott throws a light on life by the beaming geniality of his soul, and so dazzles you that you have no time or perception for anything but its beauties : while Jeffrey seems to revel in holding up his hand before the light in order that he may spy out its deformities. The face of Scott is the expression of a man whose great pleasure has been to shake nature by the hand, while to point at her with his finger has certainly, from the expression of his face, been the chief enjoyment of Jeffrey. . . .

Our Village receives the News

Wilson I think the most powerful mind I have yet encountered here. He is a man of great genius, and will be a distinguished figure. No allusion has ever passed about the "Magazine." They have treated me with great respect, and it would be beneath me to think of what is passed. There is a great concentration of talent in Edinburgh, but yet they have one peculiarity of a small town. Their stories at table derive their relish from their individuality. They all relate to some one local celebrity that you must know in order to enjoy the story. In London, on the contrary, the stories always refer to some general principle of human character that is found in all the world. But here, they are about "Davie," or "Dick," or "Sandy," or some one you never heard of, who is either lame or stutters, or squints, or has some defect, which is not general, but personal and peculiar. This, I suppose, must always be the case where the population is limited, and society confined to a small space.

II

September 8, 1822

POOR Hazlitt! He who makes so free with the follies of his friends, is of all mortals the most open to ridicule. To hear him repeat in a solemn tone and with agitated mouth the things of love he said to her (to convince you that he made love in the true gallant way), to feel the beauty of the sentiment, and then look up and see his old hard, weather-beaten, saturnine, metaphysical face—the very antidote of the sentiment—twitching all sorts of ways, is really enough to provoke a saint to laughter. He has a notion that women have never liked him. Since this affair he has dressed in the fashion, and keeps insinuating his improved appearance. *He springs up to show you his pantaloons!* What a being it is!

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His conversation is now a mixture of disappointed revenge, passionate remembrances, fiendish hopes, and melting lamentations. I feel convinced his metaphysical habits of thinking have rendered him insensible to moral duty, etc.

III

September 1823

OH, human nature! and human criticism! Did mankind know the motives which instigate all criticism on living talent, or within ten years after its existence, how cautious it would be of suffering itself to be led by modern critics! . . .

When Keats was living, I could not get Hazlitt to admit Keats had common talents. Death seems to cut off all apprehensions that our self-love will be wounded by acknowledging genius. But let us see, and sift the motives of this sudden change. "Blackwood's" people Hazlitt would murder, morally or physically, no matter which, but to murder them he wishes. To suppose Keats's death *entirely* brought on by "Blackwood's" attacks is too valuable and mortal a blow to be given up. With the wary cunning of a thoroughbred modern review writer, he dwells on this touching subject, so likely to be echoed by all who have suffered by "Blackwood's" vindictive animosities. *Now*, Keats is an immortal; before, he was a pretender! *Now*, his sensitive mind withered under their "murderous criticism," when, had Keats been a little more prominent, Hazlitt, as soon as any man, would have given him the first stab! He thus revenges his own mortification by pushing forward the shattered ghost of poor fated Keats.

Hazlitt and his innamorata have now gone to Italy, the land of Art, and he has left the "land of spinning-

Our Village receives the News

jennies and Sunday schools," as he says—and, as he forgot to say, the land also of Shakespeare and Milton, Bacon and Newton, Hampden and Locke.

IV

May 31, 1824

I HAVE not yet read Byron's "Conversations," but there was an anecdote in one of the extracts which confirms what I heard long since, but which I could not depend on before. He had an aversion to see women eat. Colonel — was at Byron's house in Piccadilly. Lady Byron in the room, and "luncheon" was brought in—veal cutlets, etc. She began eating. Byron turned round in disgust and said, "Gormandizing beast!" and taking up the tray, threw the whole luncheon into the hall. Lady Byron cried, and left the room.

Byron hated to be interrupted when he was writing, then why did she interrupt him? Because *she* thought it was a whim. To her and her dear delightful maid it might appear a whim; but if, at that moment, he was conceiving some beautiful thoughts, what can you think of a woman who, for some trifle, would interrupt her husband's conceptions? I have never said a cold thing, much more a harsh one, to Mary, but if she had come into my room and asked me if I would like roast mutton for dinner when I was conceiving "Lazarus," I think she would never have come in a second time. Setting aside that, women of rank and family are not fitted for "Love and Genius." Their pride, their importance, their habits of separate rooms, footmen, carriages, maids, and confidantes, are inconsistent with the care a man of genius requires. But every wind blows intelligence that we are right in our estimation of Byron's character.

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V

May 31, 1824

A FRIEND of mine has been spending some time at Sir Walter Scott's. Scott is liable to great intrusions of every kind. A stupid chattering fellow got at him by a letter, and stayed a week. He was a great bore, and my friend and another visitor were obliged one day to retire to a window to avoid laughing outright. Sir Walter hobbled up to them and said, "Come, come, young gentlemen, be more respectful. I assure you it requires no small talents to be a *decided bore*!" I like this! there is the geniality of the "Unknown" in it.

VI

August 18, 1826

THE other night I paid my butcher; one of the miracles of these times, you will say. Let me tell you, I have all my life been seeking for a butcher whose respect for genius predominated over his love of gain. I could not make out, before I dealt with this man, his excessive desire that I should be his customer; his sly hints as I passed his shop that he had "a bit of South Down very fine; a sweetbread, perfection; and a calf's foot that was all jelly without bone!" The other day he called, and I had him sent up into the painting-room. I found him in great admiration of "Alexander." "Quite alive, sir!" "I am glad you think so," said I. "Yes, sir; but, as I have often said to my sister, you could not have painted that picture, sir, if you had not eat my meat, sir!" "Very true, Mr. Sowerby." "Ah! sir, I have a fancy for *genus*, sir!" "Have you, Mr. Sowerby?" "Yes, sir; Mrs. Siddons, sir, has eat my meat, sir; never was *such a woman for chops, sir*!"—and he drew up his beefy, shiny face, clean shaved, with a clean blue cravat

Our Village receives the News




under his chin, a clean jacket, a clean apron, and a pair of hands that would pin an ox to the earth if he was obstreperous—"Ah! sir, she was a wonderful crayture!" "She was, Mr. Sowerby." "Ah! sir, when she used to act that there character, you see (but Lord, such a head! as I say to my sister)—that there woman, sir, that murders a king between 'em!" "Oh! Lady Macbeth." "Ah, sir, that's it—Lady Macbeth—I used to get up with the butler behind her carriage when she acted, and, as I used to see her looking quite wild, and all the people quite frightened, 'Ah, ha! my lady,' says I, 'if it wasn't for my meat, though, you wouldn't be able to do *that*!'" "Mr. Sowerby, you seem to be a man of feeling; will you take a glass of wine?" After a bow or two, down he sat, and by degrees his heart opened. "You see, sir, I have fed Mrs. Siddons, sir; John Kemble, sir; Charles Kemble, sir; Stephen Kemble, sir; and Madame Catalini, sir; Morland the painter, and I beg your pardon, sir, and *you*, sir." "Mr. Sowerby, you do me honour." "Madame Catalini, sir, was a wonderful woman for sweetbreads; but the Kemble family, sir, the gentlemen, sir, rump-steaks and kidneys in general was their taste; but Mrs. Siddons, sir, she liked chops, sir, as much as you do, sir," etc. etc. I soon perceived that the man's ambition was to feed genius. I shall recommend you to him; but is he not a capital fellow? But a little acting with his remarks would make you roar with laughter. Think of Lady Macbeth eating chops! Is this not a peep behind the curtain? I remember Wilkie saying that at a public dinner he was looking out for some celebrated man, when at last he caught a glimpse for the first time of a man whose books he had read with care for years, picking the leg of a roast goose, perfectly abstracted!

X

THE LADY OF LES ROCHERS

(Translated by Janet Aldis)

I

Madame de Sévigné to her daughter   

PARIS, *December 15, 1670*

I AM going to tell you of an event which is the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most magnificent, the most bewildering, the most unheard-off, the most singular, the most extraordinary, the most incredible, the most unexpected, the greatest, the least, the most rare, the most common, the most public, the most private till to-day, the most brilliant, the most enviable, in short, an event to which there is only one parallel to be found in past ages, and even that not an exact one; an event which we cannot believe in Paris (how then can it be believed in Lyons?), an event which makes everybody exclaim, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" an event which causes the greatest joy to Madame de Rohan and Madame d'Hauterive; an event, in fact, which will take place on Sunday next, when those who are present will doubt the evidence of their senses; an event which,

The Lady of Les Rochers

though it is to happen on Sunday, may perhaps not be accomplished on Monday. I cannot persuade myself to tell you. Guess what it is! I give you three guesses. Do you give it up? Well, then, I must tell you. Monsieur de Lauzun is to be married next Sunday at the Louvre—guess to whom! I give you four guesses, I give you ten, I give you a hundred. Madame de Coulanges says, “It is not very difficult to guess, it is Madame de Vallière.” You are quite wrong, Madame. “It is Mademoiselle de Retz, then.” No, it is not; you are very provincial.

“Dear me, how stupid we are,” you exclaim, “it is Mademoiselle de Colbert, of course.” You are farther off than ever. “Then it must be Mademoiselle de Créqui.” You are no nearer. Well, I find I must tell you. He is to marry on Sunday at the Louvre, with the King’s permission, Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle de—Mademoiselle—guess the name! he is to marry Mademoiselle, my faith! by my faith! my sworn faith! Mademoiselle, La Grande Mademoiselle; Mademoiselle, daughter of the late Monsieur; Mademoiselle, granddaughter of Henry IV; Mademoiselle d’Eu, Mademoiselle de Dombes, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Mademoiselle d’Orléans; Mademoiselle, first cousin to the King; Mademoiselle, once destined for the throne; Mademoiselle, the only person in France worthy of Monsieur. Here is a fine subject for conversation. If you cry out, if you are beside yourselves, if you say we are deceiving you, that it is false, that we are laughing at you, that it is a pretty joke, that it is a very poor invention; if, in fact, you abuse us, we shall say you are right, for we have done the same ourselves. Adieu. You will see by the letters you receive by this post whether I am telling you the truth or not.

The Second Post

II

At M. DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD'S HOUSE

Friday evening, April 24, 1671

HERE, then, I make up my packet. I had intended to tell you that the King arrived yesterday evening at Chantilly; and that he hunted a stag by moonlight. The illuminations were wonderful; the fireworks were a little eclipsed by our friend the moon, it is true, but the evening, the supper, and the entertainment, all went off admirably. . . . But what do you think I learned when I came here? I am not yet recovered, and hardly know what I write. Vatel, the great Vatel, late *maître d'hôtel* to M. Foucquet, and now acting in that capacity to M. Le Prince, that man of such distinguished capability above all others, whose abilities were equal to governing a State; this man whom I knew so well, finding that the fish did not come, ran himself through with a sword. . . .

I wrote to you last Friday that he had stabbed himself, and here are the particulars of the affair. The King arrived there on Thursday evening, and the hunt, the illuminations, the moonlight, the promenade, the banquet in a place strewn with jonquils, were all that could be desired. Supper was served, but there were some tables at which there was no roast meat, because Vatel had had to provide several dinners that had not been expected. This greatly troubled Vatel, who was heard to say several times, "I have lost my honour; I cannot endure this disgrace!"

"My head is quite bewildered," he said to Gourville; "I have not slept for twelve nights; I wish you would help me to give orders."

Gourville did all he could to assist and console him,

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but the failure of the roast meat—which, however, did not happen at the King's table, but at some of the other twenty-five—was always in his mind. Gourville mentioned it to the Prince, who went to Vatel's room, and said to him—

“Everything is admirably managed, Vatel ; nothing could be better than the King's supper.”

“Your goodness overwhelms me, Monseigneur,” replied Vatel, “but I know there was no roast meat at two tables.”

“Not at all,” said the Prince ; “do not distress yourself, and all will be well. . . .”

At four o'clock the next morning, Vatel went round and found every one asleep. He met one of the under-purveyors, who had just brought in a load of fish.

“Is this all ?” asked Vatel.

“Yes, sir,” said the man, who did not know that Vatel had ordered fish from all the seaports round.

He waited for some time, but the other purveyors did not come ; his head grew distracted ; he believed there was no more fish to be had. He then went to Gourville and exclaimed—

“Sir, I cannot outlive this disgrace ; I shall lose my honour and reputation ;” but Gourville only laughed at him.

Vatel, however, went to his room, and, placing the hilt of his sword against the door, after two ineffectual attempts succeeded the third time in forcing the sword through his heart, and he fell dead.

At that instant the purveyors arrived with the fish, and search was made for Vatel, to distribute it. They went to his room ; they knocked, and receiving no answer, they broke open the door, and discovered him lying in a pool of blood. . . .

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III

LES ROCHERS, *June 28, 1671*

WE read Tasso with pleasure, and I am fairly proficient in the language, thanks to the excellent masters I have had. My son makes La Mousse read *Cléopâtre*, and I listen to him whether I will or not, and am amused. My son is going to Lorraine ; we shall be very dull in his absence. You know how it vexes me to see the breaking up of an agreeable party, and how delighted I am when I see a carriage driving off with people who have wearied me to death all day ; upon which we might make the observation that bad company is more desirable than good. I recollect all the odd things we used to say when you were here, and all you said yourself, and all you did ; the thought of you never leaves me ; and then, again, I suddenly remember where you are, my imagination represents to me an immense space and a great distance ; suddenly your Castle bounds the prospect, and I am displeased at the walls that enclose your mall. Ours is surprisingly beautiful, and the young nursery is delightful. I take pleasure in rearing their little heads to the clouds ; and frequently, without considering consequences or my own interests, cut down the tall trees because their shade is bad for my young ones. My son looks on at all these proceedings, but I do not allow him to interfere.

Pilois continues to be a great favourite with me, and I prefer his conversation to that of many who have the title of chevalier in the Parlement of Rennes. I have grown rather more unceremonious than you, for the other day I let a carriageful of the Fonesuel family go home through a tremendous rain for want of a little pressing them with a good grace to stay ; but I could not get the compliment

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to pass my lips ! . . . I have just been writing to Vivonne about a captain of a group of gypsies, whose confinement I have begged him to make as easy as possible, without detriment to the King's service. You must know that among the band of Bohemians I mentioned to you the other day, was a young girl who danced extremely well, and who put me very much in mind of you. I was pleased with her, and she begged me to write to Provence in favour of her grandfather. "Where is he?" I asked. "He is at Marseilles," said she, with as much composure and unconcern as if she had said, "He is at Vincennes." He was a man of singular merit, it appears, in his way : in short, I promised to write about him. I immediately thought of Vivonne, and I send you the letter I have written to him. If you are not on such terms with him as will allow me to jest, you may burn it ; but if you are friendly with his corpulency, and my letter will save you the trouble of writing one, seal it and send it to him. I could not refuse this request to the poor girl, and to the best-danced minuet that I have seen since the days of Mademoiselle de Sévigné. She had just your air ; with good teeth and fine eyes, and was about your height.

IV

I HAVE bought some stuff like your last petticoat to make a morning-gown, and it is very beautiful. There is a shade of green in it, but violet predominates ; in short, I could not resist the purchase. They would have me line it with flame-colour, but this appeared to me inconsistent ; for while the outside is expressive of frailty, the inside would have signified impenitence, even obduracy, so I fixed on a white taffety. I have put myself to very little expense, as I hate Brittany, and shall be

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most economical till I come to Provence, that I may then support the position and dignity of the middle-aged wonder that you have represented me to be.

V

AUX ROCHERS, *November 13, 1675*

... YOU are surprised to hear I have a little dog ; this is how it happened. One day I was calling a little dog which belongs to a lady who lives at the end of the park. Madame de Tarente said to me : "What ! do you like dogs ? I will send you one of the prettiest you have ever seen." I thanked her, and said I had made a resolution never again to indulge myself in an affection of that kind ; so the subject was dropped, and I thought no more of it. A few days after, I saw a footman bringing a little dog-kennel, all decorated with ribbons, and out of this pretty kennel jumped a little perfumed dog, quite extraordinary beautiful, with ears, coat, and sweet breath like a little sylph, the fairest of the fair. I was never more surprised or more embarrassed. I would have returned it, but the servant would not take it back ; though the chamber-maid who had reared it was fit to die with grief for the loss of it. It is Marie who is so fond of it ; he sleeps in his kennel in Beaulieu's room, and eats nothing but bread. I try not to become too attached to it, but it begins to like me, and I am afraid I shall succumb to its affection. This is the story which I beg you not to tell to Marphise (her pet dog) at Paris, for I dread her reproaches. But it is the cleanliest little animal you ever saw ; its name is Fidèle, a name, I believe, that the lovers of the Princess have never deserved, though they have been of some importance. Some day I will amuse you with her adventures. Her

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style, it is true, is full of faintings, and I do not think she has had sufficient leisure to love her daughter, not at least as I love mine. More than one heart would be necessary to love so many things at once, and I perceive every day that the great fish eat up all the little ones. If you are, as you say, very preservative, I am very much obliged to you. I cannot too highly prize the love I have for you. I do not know from what dangers it has guarded me, but if it were from fire or from water, it could not be dearer to me than it is.

VI

WEDNESDAY, *May 20, 1676*

TO-DAY I began the pump operation, and it is not a bad foretaste of purgatory. The patient is quite naked in a little underground room, where there is a tube of hot water which a woman directs wherever you wish. Behind the curtain is a person who sustains your courage for half an hour. A physician of Ganot fell to my lot; a very worthy man, who is neither a quack nor a bigot; I shall keep him though it cost me my cap, for the doctors here are unbearable, and this man amuses me; he has wit and honesty, and knows the world. He talked to me the whole time I was under torture. Just think of a spout of water pouring over one or other of your poor limbs! It is first applied to every part of the body to rouse the spirits, and then to the affected joints; but when it comes to the nape of the neck, the heat produces such a surprise that it is impossible to describe it. However, it is necessary to suffer, and we do suffer, but we are not quite scalded to death; and we are then put into a warm bed, where we perspire profusely, and in this way we are cured.

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It is like taking a new lease of life and health, and if I could only see and embrace you once more, with a heart overflowing with tenderness and joy you would perhaps again call me your *bellissima madre*, and I should not give up the title of *mère-beauté* with which M. de Coulanges has honoured me.

Madame de Brissac was ill to-day, and remained in bed, with her hair dressed so beautifully, and looking so handsome, that she was fit to turn everybody's head. I wished you could have seen how prettily she managed her sufferings, her eyes, her arms, and her cries, with her hands lying helplessly in the quilt, and looking for the sympathy she expected from all bystanders. I was quite overcome with tenderness and admiration as I watched this little performance, and though it is so excellent that my evident attention must have given much satisfaction. Just think this scene was played entirely on account of the Abbé Bayard, Saint Hérem, Montjeu and Plancy ! My child, when I remember with what simplicity you are ill, and the calmness in your pretty face, you seem to me a mere bungler ! What a difference ! I found it very amusing.

VII

I LOVE Pauline ; you describe her as pretty and good-humoured ; I can see her running everywhere and telling every one of the taking of Philipsburg. Love, love your daughter, my dear child ; it is the most natural and delightful occupation in the world.

XI

CARLYLE DISCOVERS LONDON

Thomas Carlyle to Alexander Carlyle



I

June 25, 1824

... **W**HEN I see you I will tell you of Westminster Abbey ; and St. Paul's, the only edifice that ever struck me with a proper sense of grandeur. I was hurrying along Cheapside into Newgate Street among a thousand bustling pigmies and the innumerable jinglings and rollings and crashings of many-coloured Labour, when all at once in passing from the abode of John Gilpin, stunned by the tumult of his restless compeers, I looked up from the boiling throng through a little opening at the corner of the street—and there stood St. Paul's—with its columns and friezes, and massy wings of bleached yet unworn stone ; with its statues and its graves around it ; with its solemn dome four hundred feet above me, and its gilded ball and cross gleaming in the evening sun, piercing up into the heaven through the vapours of our earthly home ! It was silent as Tadmor of the Wilderness ; gigantic, beautiful, enduring ; it seemed to frown with a rebuking pity on the vain scramble which it overlooked : at its feet were tomb-

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stones, above it was the everlasting sky, within priests perhaps were chanting hymns ; it seemed to transmit with a stern voice the sounds of Death, Judgment and Eternity through all the frivolous and fluctuating city. I saw it oft and from various points, and never without new admiration.

Did you get *Meister*, and how do you *dislike* it? For really it is a most mixed performance, and though intellectually good, much of it is morally bad. It is making way here perhaps—but slowly : a second edition seems a dubious matter. No difference ! I have the produce of the first lying here beside me in hard notes of the Bank of England, and fear no weather. I bought myself a suit of fine clothes for six pounds a good watch for six ; and these were nearly all my purchases. . . .

II

December 14, 1824

MY DEAR ALICK,— . . . Your letter found me in due season ; and a welcome visitant it was. I had got the *Courier* that preceded it, and the intelligence of your proceedings and welfare was no small relief to me. You must thank our Mother in my name in the warmest terms for her kind note, which I have read again and again with an attention rarely given to more polished compositions. The sight of her rough true-hearted writing is more to me than the finest penmanship and the choicest rhetoric. It takes me home to honest kindness, and affection that will never fail me. You also I must thank for your graphic picture of Mainhill and its neighbourhood. How many changes happen in this restless roundabout of life within a little space ! . . .

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In London, or rather in my own small sphere of it, there has nothing sinister occurred since I wrote last. After abundant scolding, which sometimes rose to the very borders of bullying, those unhappy people [the publishers] are proceeding pretty regularly with *the Book* ; a fifth part of it is already printed ; they are also getting a portrait of *Schiller* engraved for it ; and I hope in about six weeks the thing will be off my hands. It will make a reasonable looking book ; somewhat larger than a volume of *Meister*, and done in somewhat of the same style. In the course of printing I have various matters to attend to ; proofs to read ; additions, alterations to make ; which furnishes me with a very *canny* occupation for the portion of the day I can devote to labour. I work some three or four hours ; read for amusement chiefly, about as long ; walk about these dingy streets, and talk with originals for the rest of the day. On the whole I have not been happier for many a long month : I feel content to let things take their turn till I am free of engagements ; and then—for a stern and serious *tussle* with my Fate, which I have vowed and determined to alter from the very bottom, health and all ! This *will not* be impossible, or even I think extremely difficult. Far beyond a million of “weaker vessels” than I are sailing very comfortably along the tide of life just here. What good is it to whine and whimper ? Let every man that has an ounce of strength in him get up and put it forth in Heaven’s name, and labour that his “soul may live.”

Of this enormous Babel of a place I can give you no account in writing : it is like the heart of all the universe ; and the flood of human effort rolls out of it and into it with a violence that almost appals one’s very sense. Paris scarcely occupies a quarter of the ground, and

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does not seem to have the twentieth part of the business. O that our father saw Holborn in a fog ! with the black vapour brooding over it, absolutely like fluid ink ; and coaches and wains and sheep and oxen and wild people rushing on with bellowings and shrieks and thundering din, as if the earth in general were gone distracted. To-day I chanced to pass through Smithfield, when the market was three-fourths over. I mounted the steps of a door, and looked abroad upon the area, an irregular space of perhaps thirty acres in extent, encircled with old dingy brick-built houses, and intersected with wooden pens for the cattle. What a scene ! Innumerable herds of fat oxen, tied in long rows, or passing at a trot to their several shambles ; and thousands of graziers, drovers, butchers, cattle-brokers with their quilted frocks and long goads pushing on the hapless beasts ; hurrying to and fro in confused parties, shouting, jostling, cursing, in the midst of rain and *shairn*, and braying discord such as the imagination cannot figure. Then there are stately streets and squares, and calm green recesses to which nothing of this abomination is permitted to enter. No wonder Cobbett calls the place a Wen. It is a monstrous Wen ! The thick smoke of it beclouds a space of thirty square miles ; and a million of vehicles, from the dog-or cuddy-barrow to the giant waggon, grind along its streets for ever. I saw a six-horse wain the other day with, I think, number 200,000 and odds upon it !

There is an excitement in all this, which is pleasant at a transitory feeling, but much against my taste as a permanent one. I had much rather visit London from time to time, than live in it. There is in fact no *right* life in it that I can find : the people are situated here like plants in a hot-house, to which the quiet influences of sky and earth are never in their unadulterated state admitted. Is

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is the case with all ranks ; the carman with his huge slouch-hat hanging half-way down his back, consumes his breakfast of bread and tallow or hog's lard, sometimes as he swags along the streets, always in a hurried and precarious fashion, and supplies the deficit by continual pipes, and pots of beer. The fashionable lady rises at three in the afternoon, and begins to live towards midnight. Between these two extremes, the same false and tumultuous manner of existence more or less infests all ranks. It seems as if you were forever in "an inn," the feeling of *home* in our acceptation of the term is not known to one of a thousand. You are packed into paltry shells of brick-houses (calculated to endure for forty years, and then fall) ; every door that slams to in the street is audible in your most secret chamber ; the necessities of life are hawked about through multitudes of hands, and reach you, frequently adulterated, always at rather more than *twice* their cost elsewhere ; people's friends must visit them by rule and measure ; and when you issue from your door, you are assailed by vast shoals of quacks, and showmen, and street-sweepers, and pickpockets, and mendicants of every degree and shape, all plying in noise or silent craft their several vocations, all in their hearts like "lions ravening for their prey." The blackguard population of the place is the most consummately blackguard of anything I ever saw.

Yet the people are in general a frank, jolly, *well-living*, kindly people. You get a certain way in their good graces with great ease : they want little more with you than now and then a piece of recreating conversation, and you are quickly on terms for giving and receiving it. Farther, I suspect, their nature or their habits seldom carry or admit them. I have found one or two strange

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mortals, whom I sometimes stare to see myself beside. There is Crabb Robinson, an old Templar (Advocate dwelling in the Temple), who gives me coffee and *Sally-Lunns* (a sort of buttered roll), and German books, and talk by the gallon in a minute. His windows look into—Alsatia ! With the Montagus I, once a week or so, step in and chat away a friendly hour : they are good clever people, though their goodness and cleverness are strangely mingled with absurdity in word and deed. They like me very well : I saw Badams there last night ; I am to see him more at large to-morrow or soon after. Mrs. Strachey has twice been here to see me—in her carriage, a circumstance of strange omen to our worthy [friend]. . . . Among the Poets I see Procter and Allan Cunningham as often as I like : the other night I had a second and much longer talk with Campbell. I went over with one Macbeth, not the “Usurper,” but a hapless Preacher from Scotland, whose gifts, coupled with their drawbacks, cannot earn him bread in London, though Campbell and Irving and many more are doing all they can for him. Thomas is a clever man, and we had a much more pleasant conversation than our first : but I do not think my view of him was materially altered. He is vain and dry in heart ; the brilliancy of his mind (which will not dazzle you to death after all) is like the glitter of an iceberg in the Greenland seas ; parts of it are beautiful, but it is cold, cold, and you would rather look at it than touch it. I partly feel for Campbell : his early life was a tissue of wretchedness (here in London he has lived upon a pennyworth of milk and a penny roll per day) ; and at length his soul has got encrusted as with a case of iron ; and he has betaken himself to sneering and selfishness—a common issue !

Irving I see as frequently and kindly as ever. His

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church and boy occupy him much. The *madness* of his popularity is altogether over; and he must content himself with playing a much lower game than he once anticipated; nevertheless I imagine he will do much good in London, where many men like him are greatly wanted. His wife and he are always good to me.

Respecting my future movements I can predict nothing certain yet. It is not improbable, I think, that I may see you all in Scotland before many weeks are come and gone. Here at any rate, in my present circumstances, I do not mean to stay: it is expensive beyond measure (two guineas a week or thereby for the mere items of bed and board); and I must have a *permanent* abode of some kind devised for myself, if I mean to do any good. Within reach of Edinburgh or London, it matters little which. You have not yet determined upon leaving or retaining Mainhill? I think it is a pity that you had not some more kindly spot: at all events a better house I *would* have. Is Mainholm let? By clubbing our capitals together we might make something of it. A house in the country, and a horse to ride on, I must and will have if it be possible. Tell me all your views on these things when you write.

. . . Good night! my dear Alick!—I am, ever your affectionate Brother,
T. CARLYLE

III

January 8, 1825

MY DEAR ALICK,—Your letter came to me the day before Christmas; it is time that it were answered. I am much obliged to you for your punctuality; a virtue which in my situation I am called upon to rival or even to surpass. I have no news for

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you ; only harmless chat ; but that and the assurance that there is no *bad* news will repay you for the charge of postage. . . .

Everything goes on with me here very much as it was doing when I wrote last. . . . I think I have well-nigh decided on returning to Scotland, when this Book is off my hands. This tumultuous capital is not the place for one like me. The very expense of it were almost enough to drive me out of it : I cannot live in the simplest style under about two guineas a week ; a sum that would suffice to keep a decent roof of my own above me in my Fatherland. Besides I ought to settle somewhere, and get a home and neighbourhood among my fellow-creatures. Now this London, to my mind, is not a flattering scene for such an enterprise. One hates, for one thing, to be a *foreigner* anywhere ; and this, after all that can be said about it, is the case with *every* Scotchman in this city. They live as aliens here, unrooted in the soil ; without political, religious, or even much social, interest in the community, distinctly feeling every day that with them it is money only that can “ make the mare to go.” Hence cash ! cash ! cash ! is the everlasting cry of their souls. They are consequently very “ hard characters ” ; they believe in nothing but their ledgers ; their precept is like that of Iago, “ Put money in your purse ” ; or as he of Burnfoot more emphatically expressed it, “ Now, Jock ! Get siller, honestly, if thou can ; but ony way *get* it ! ” I should like but indifferently to be ranked among them ; for my sentiments and theirs are not at all germane. The first *improvement* they make upon themselves in the South is to acquire the habit of sneering at their honest old country ; vending many stale jokes about its poverty, and the happiness of travelling with one’s face *towards* the sun. This is a

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"damnable heresy," as honest Allan Cunningham called it. I have no patience with the leaden-hearted dogs. Often when appealed to that I might confirm such shallow sarcasms, I have risen in my wrath, and branded them with my bitterest contempt. But here they are staple speculation with our degenerate compatriots. BULL himself, again, though a frank, beef-loving, joyous kind of person, *is* excessively stupid: take him out of the sphere of the *five senses*, and he gazes with a vacant astonishment, and wondering "what the devil the fellow *can* mean." This is comparatively the state of all ranks, so far as I have seen them, from the highest to the lowest; but especially of the latter. Of these it is unspeakably so! Yesterday I went to see Newgate, under the auspices of the benevolent Mrs. Fry, a Quaker lady who every Friday goes on her errand of mercy to inspect the condition of the female prisoners. She, this good Quakeress, is as much like an angel of Peace as any person I ever saw: she read a chapter, and *expounded* it, to the most degraded audience of the universe, in a style of beautiful simplicity which I shall not soon forget. But oh! the male felons! the two hundred polluted wretches, through whose stalls and yards I was next carried! There were they of all climates and kinds, the Jew, the Turk, the "Christian"; from the gray villain of sixty to the blackguard boy of *eight*! Nor was it their depravity that struck me, so much as their debasement. Most of them actually looked like *animals*; you could see no traces of a *soul* (not even of a bad one) in their gloating, callous, sensual countenances; they had never *thought* at all, they had only eaten and drunk and made merry. I have seen as wicked people in the north; but it was another and far less abominable sort of wickedness. A Scotch black-

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guard is very generally a thinking reasoning person; some theory and principle of life, a satanical philosophy, beams from every feature of his rugged scowling countenance. Not so here. The sharpness of these people was the cunning of a fox, their stubbornness was the sullen gloom of a mastiff. Newgate holds, I believe, within its walls more human baseness than any other spot in the Creation.

But why do I write of it or aught connected with it, since in a few weeks I hope to tell you everything by word of mouth? We are on the fifteenth sheet of *Schiller*; *six* more will see us through it. The moment it is finished, I purpose to decamp. I have given the creatures *four* weeks (they engage for *three*) to settle everything: I should not be surprised if you met me at the Candlemas Fair on the Plainstones of Dumfries! Soon after the beginning of February I do expect to see old, meagre but true-hearted Annandale again. No doubt, you will have the *wark-gear afoot*, that is, the pony in riding order, and everything in readiness for me. When arrived, my purposes are various, and inviting though unsettled. I have written to Edinburgh about a projected translation of *Schiller's Works*; Brewster sends me word that Blackwood (the Bookseller) "has no doubt he will be able to engage with me, in *Schiller* (which, however, he does not seem to relish), or in some other literary object." Blackwood, I believe, is but a knave; and I put no faith in him. Nay, since I began to write this sentence, I have a letter from the scoundrel Boyd "respectfully declining" to engage in that speculation of *Schiller*! So that I rather suppose *it* must be renounced. No matter! There are plenty more where it came from! I am bent on *farming*, for the recovery of my health; nay "marriage" itself is sometimes not out of my ulterior

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contemplations ! But I will explain all things when we meet.

But the day is breaking up into fair sunshine ; and I must out to take the benefit of it. Let me have a letter from you, a long one, and a good one like the last, by the very earliest opportunity. Thank my kind true Mother for her note : tell her it will not be long till I answer all her queries by word of mouth. In the meantime, I have a message for her, which I know will please her well, because it is to *do something for me*. Badams prescribes *warmth* above all things : he made me wear close stocking (flannel or rather woollen) drawers even in summer. My Mother once offered to get Peter Little to work me such a pair ; tell her that now if she has any wool, I will take them. If she has not, she need never mind in the least : we can settle it,—when—we meet ! Do you regularly hear of Jack ? He is a letter in my debt for ten days. But I hope the good soul is well. Does he send you the *Examiner* ? Has he written you a translation of Goethe's letter to me ? I was very glad to hear from the old blade, in so kind though so brief a fashion. I mean to send him a copy of *Schiller's Life*, so soon as it is ready.

Now, my dear Boy, I must take my flight. I have purchased me a small seal and the Carlyles' crest with *Humiliate* and all the rest of it engraven on it. The thing lies at present in Oxford Street, and was to be ready about this time to-day. I am going thither : if I get it, I will seal this letter with it, for your edification. Write directly, and tell me all ; the progress of the *Gheen* and everything notable, in and about Mainhill. The smallest incident from that quarter recorded in your pithy style is valuable to me.

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Irving and I are as friendly as ever. He is toiling in the midst of many difficulties and tasks, internal and external, domestic and ecclesiastic. I wish him well through them! He is the best man I have met in England. But here, as I told him lately, he has no home; he is a "missionary" rather than a pastor.—My Father has never written to me: I should like much to see his hand in London. Give my warmest love to him and Mother, and all the *brethren* and sisters, beginning with Mag and ending with Jenny. Write soon, good Alick!—I am, ever your true Brother, T. CARLYLE

XII

PARTICULAR WIFE TO PARTICULAR HUSBAND

(With Thomas Carlyle's Notes)

I

Jane Welsh Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle



October 12, 1835

DEAREST,—A newspaper is very pleasant when one is expecting nothing at all ; but when it comes in place of a letter it is a positive insult to one's feelings. Accordingly your first newspaper was received by me in choicest mood ; and the second would have been pitched in the fire, had there been one at hand, when, after having tumbled myself from top story at the risk of my neck, I found myself deluded with "wun penny 'm." However, I flatter myself you would experience something of a similar disappointment on receiving mine ; and so we are quits, and I need not scold you. I have not been a day in bed since you went—have indeed been almost free of headache, and all other aches ; and everybody says Mrs. Carlyle begins to look better—and what everybody says must be true. With this improved health everything becomes tolerable, even to the peesweep Sereetha (for we are still without other help). Now that I do not see you driven desperate with the

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chaos, I can take a quiet view of it, and even reduce it to some degree of order. Mother and I have fallen naturally into a fair division of labour, and we keep a very tidy house. Sereetha has attained the unhopèd-for perfection of getting up at half after six of her own accord, lighting the parlour-fire, and actually placing the breakfast things *nil desperandum me duce* ! I get up half after seven, and prepare the coffee, and bacon-ham (which is the life of me, making me always hungrier the more I eat of it). Mother, in the interim, makes her bed, and sorts her room. After breakfast, mother descends to the inferno, where she jingles and scours, and from time to time scolds Sereetha till all is right and tight there. I, above stairs, sweep the parlour, blacken the grate—make the room look cleaner than it has been since the days of Grace Macdonald¹ ; then mount aloft to make my own bed (for I was resolved to enjoy the privilege of having a bed of my own) ; then clean myself (as the servants say), and sit down to the Italian lesson. A bit of meat roasted at the oven suffices two days cold, and does not plague us with cookery. Sereetha can fetch up tea-things, and the porridge is easily made on the parlour-fire ; the kitchen one being allowed to go out (for economy), when the Peesweep retires to bed at eight o'clock.

That we are not neglected by the public, you may infer from the fact that, this very night, Peesweep fetched up four tea-cups on the tray ; and when I asked the meaning of the two additional, she inquired, with surprise, “Were there to be no gentlemen?” “In fact, the kindness of these people” “beats the world.” I had some private misgiving that your men would not mind me when you were not here, and I should have been mortified

¹ The Edinburgh servant we brought with us to Craigen-puttock ; the skilfullest we ever had anywhere.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

in that case, though I could not have blamed them. But it is quite the reverse. Little Grant¹ has been twice to know if he could "do anything for me." Garnier has been twice! The first time by engagement to you; the second time to meet Pepoli, whom he knew in Paris, and wished to re-know, and who proved *perfido* on the occasion. Pepoli has been twice, and is gliding into a flirtation with—*mia madre!* who presented him, in a manner *molto graziosa*, with her tartan scarf. From John Mill I have been privileged with two notes, and one visit. He evidently tried to yawn as little as possible, and stayed till the usual hour, lest, I suppose, he should seem to have missed your conversation. John Sterling and the Stimabile,² of course. The latter was at tea last night to meet Mr. Gibson³—one of my fatal attempts at producing a reunion, for they coincided in nothing but years. The Stimabile was at Brighton for several days, and goes again next week, so that he has not been too deadly frequent.

Our visiting has been confined to one dinner and two teas at the Sterlings', and a tea at Hunt's! You must know, — came the day after you went, and stayed two days. As she desired above all things to see Hunt, I wrote him a note asking him if I might bring her up to call. He replied he was just setting off to town, but

¹ Official in the India House, a friend and admirer of John Mill's.

² A title we had for John's father. Signora degli Antoni, the Italian instructress in these months, setting her pupil an epistolary pattern, had thrown off one day a billet as if addressed to Edward Sterling, which began with *Stimabile Signor*.

³ Was a massive, easy, friendly, dull person, physically one of the best washed I ever saw; American merchant, "who had made, and again lost, three fortunes"; originally a Nithsdale pedlar boy, "Black Wull," by title; "Silver-headed Packman," he was often called here.

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would look in at eight o'clock. I supposed this, as usual, a mere put-off; but he actually came and found Pepoli as well as Miss ——, was amazingly lively, and very lasting, for he stayed till near twelve. Between ourselves, it gave me a poorish opinion of him, to see how uplifted to the third heaven he seemed by ——'s compliments and sympathising talk. He asked us all, with enthusiasm, to tea the following Monday. —— came on purpose and slept here. He sang, talked like a pea-gun,¹ ever to ——, who drank it all in like nectar, while my mother looked cross enough, and I had to listen to the whispered confidences of Mrs. Hunt. But for me, who was declared to be grown "quite prim and elderly," I believe they would have communicated their mutual experiences in a retired window-seat till morning. "God bless you, Miss ——," was repeated by Hunt three several times in tones of ever-increasing pathos and tenderness as he handed her downstairs behind me. ——, for once in her life, seemed past speech. At the bottom of the stairs a demur took place. I saw nothing; but I heard, with my wonted glegness—what think you? —a couple of handsome smacks! and then an almost inaudibly soft "God bless you, Miss ——!"

Now just remember what sort of looking woman is ——; and figure their transaction! If he had kissed me, it would have been intelligible, but ——, of all people! By the way, Mr. Craik² is immensely delighted with you, and grateful to Susan for having brought you together. Mrs. Cole³ came the other day, and sat an hour waiting

¹ *Scoticè*, gun made of grill-barrel for shooting peas (and "cracking," which also means pleasantly conversing).

² *Useful Knowledge* Craik, poor fellow!

³ The now thrice-notable "Crystal Palace," "Brompton Boilers," etc. etc., Henry Cole's wife.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

for me while I was out, and finally had to go, leaving an obliging note offering me every assistance in procuring a servant.

Mrs. John Sterling takes to me wonderfully ; but John, I perceive, will spoil all with his innocence. He told her the other day, when she was declaring her wish that he would write on Theology rather than make verses, that she "might fight out that matter with Mrs. Carlyle, who, he knew, was always on the side of the poetical." He (Sterling) has written a positively splendid poem of half-an-hour's length—an allegorical shadowing of the union of the ideal and actual. It is far the best thing he ever did—far beyond anything I could have supposed him capable of. He said, when he was writing it, he thought sometimes, "Carlyle will be pleased with that."

To descend to the practical, or, I should rather say ascend, for I have filled my whole paper with mere gossip. I think you seem, so far as human calculations avail, to have made a good hit as to the servant ; character is not worth a straw ; but, you say she looks intelligent and good-humoured, is young and willing.¹ Fetch her, then, in God's name, and I will make the best I can of her. After all, we fret ourselves too much about little things ; much that might be laughed off, if one were well and cheerful as one ought to be, becomes a grave affliction from being too gravely looked at. Remember also meal, and oh, for goodness sake, procure a dozen of bacon-hams ! There is no bottom to my appetite for them. Sell poor Harry, by all means, or shoot him. We are too poor to indulge our fine feelings with keeping such large pets (especially at other people's expense). What a pity no frank is to be got ! I have told you nothing yet. No word ever came

¹ Anne Cook (got for me by sister Mary, at Annan).

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from Basil Montagu. I have translated four songs into Italian—written a long excessively *spirituosa* letter to “mia adorabile Clementina,”¹ and many *graziose cartucie* besides. In truth, I have a divine *ingegno*!

You will come back strong and cheerful, will you not? I wish you were come, anyhow. Don't take much castor; eat plenty of chicken broth rather. Dispense my love largely. Mother returns your kiss with interest. We go on tolerably enough; but she has vowed to hate all my people except Pepoli. So that there is ever a “dark brown shadd” in all my little reunions. She has given me a glorious black-velvet gown, realising my *beau idéal* of Putz.

Did you take away my folding penknife? We are knifeless here. We were to have gone to Richmond to-day with the Silverheaded; but, to my great relief, it turned out that the steamboat is not running.

God keep you, my own dear husband, and bring you safe back to me. The house looks very empty without you, and my mind feels empty too.—

Your JANE

II

August 23, 1842

MY DEAR HUSBAND,—The pen was in my hand to write yesterday; but nothing would have come out of me yesterday except “literature of desperation”;² and, aware of this, I thought it better to hold my peace for the next twenty-four hours, till a new night had either habilitated me for remaining awhile longer, or brought me to the desperate resolution of flying home for my life. Last night, Heaven be thanked, went off peaceably; and to-day I am in a state to record my last trial,

¹ Degli Antoni.

² *Litteratur der Verzweiflung* was Goethe's definition of Victor Hugo and Co.'s new gospel.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

without danger of becoming too tragical, or alarming you with the prospect of my making an unseemly termination of my visit. (Oh, what pens !)

To begin where I left off. On Sunday, after writing to you, I attended the afternoon service ! Regy looked so *wae* when I answered his question "whether I was going ?" in the negative, that a weak pity induced me to revise my determination. "It is a nice pew, that of ours," said old Mr. Buller ; "it suits me remarkably well, for being so deep I am not overlooked ; and in virtue of that, I read most part of the *Femme de Qualité* this morning !" "But don't," he added, "tell Mr. Regy this ! Had Theresa been there, I would not have done it, for I like to set a good example !" I also turned the depth of the pew to good account ; when the sermon began, I made myself, at the bottom of it, a sort of Persian couch out of the praying-cushions ; laid off my bonnet, and stretched myself out very much at my ease. I seemed to have been thus just one drowsy minute when a slight rustling, and the words "Now to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," warned me to put on my bonnet, and made me for the first time aware that I had been asleep ! For the rest, the music that day ought to have satisfied me ; for it seemed to have remodelled itself expressly to suit my taste—Scotch tunes, produced with the nasal discordant emphasis of a Scotch country-congregation, and no clarionet. I noticed in a little square gallery-seat, the only one in the church, a portly character, who acts as blacksmith, sitting with a wand, some five feet long, in his hand, which he swayed about majestically as if it had been a sceptre ! On inquiring of our man-servant what this could possibly mean or symbolise, he informed me it was "to beat bad children." "And are the children here so bad they need such a functionary ?" "Ah, they will

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always, them little 'uns, be doing mischief in the church : it's a-wearisome for the poor things, and the rod keeps them in fear ! ”

In the evening, the drive, as always, with this only difference, that on Sunday evenings, Mr. Buller only walks the horse, from principle ! After this conscientious exercising, the game at chess ! My head had ached more or less all day, and I was glad to get to bed, where I was fortunate enough to get to sleep without any violent disturbance. The next day, however, my head was rather worse than better ; so that I would fain have “declined from ”¹ calling on Lady Agnes ; but Mrs. Buller was bent on going to Livermere, and so, as I did not feel up to walking, it was my only chance of getting any fresh air and exercise that day. To Livermere we went, then, before dinner, the dinner being deferred till five o'clock to suit the more fashionable hours of our visitees. “The Pagets ” seem to be extremely like other mortals, neither better nor bonnier nor wiser. To do them justice, however, they might, as we found them, have been sitting for a picture of high life doing the amiable and the rural in the country. They had placed a table under the shadow of a beech-tree ; and at this sat Mr. Byng studying the “Examiner ” ; Lady Agnes reading—“Oh, nothing at all, only some nonsense that Lord Londonderry has been printing ; I cannot think what has tempted him ; ” and a boy and girl marking for a cricket-party, consisting of all the men-servants, and two older little sons, who were playing for the entertainment of their master and mistress and their own ; the younger branches ever and anon clapping their hands, and calling out “What fun ! ” I may mention for your con-

¹ The phrase of a rustic cousin of ours, kind of a solemn pedant in his way.

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solation that Mr. Byng (a tall, gentlemanly, blasé-looking man) was dressed from head to foot in unbleached linen ; while Babbie may take a slight satisfaction to her curiosity *de femme* from knowing how a Paget attires herself of a morning, to sit under a beech-tree—a white-flowered muslin pelisse, over pale blue satin ; a black lace scarf fastened against her heart with a little gold horse-shoe ; her white neck tolerably revealed, and set off with a brooch of diamonds ; immense gold bracelets, an immense gold chain ; a little white silk bonnet with a profusion of blond and flowers ; thus had she prepared herself for being rural. But, with all this finery, she looked a good-hearted, rattling, clever *haveral*¹ sort of a woman. Her account of Lord Londonderry's sentimental dedication to his wife was perfect—"from a goose to a goose!"—and she defended herself with her pocket handkerchief against the wasps, with an energy. When we had sat sufficiently long under the tree, Mrs. Buller asked her to take me through the gardens, which she did very politely, and gave me some carnations and verbenas ; and then through the stables, which were, indeed, the finer sight of the two.

All this sight-seeing, however, did not help my head ; at night I let the chess go as it liked ; took some medicine, and went early to bed, determined to be well on the morrow. About twelve, I fell into a sound sleep, out of which I was startled by the tolling of the church-bell. The church, you remember, is only a stone-cast from the house ; so that, when the bell tolls, one seems to be exactly under its tongue. I sprang up—it was half after three by my watch—hardly light ; the bell went on to

¹ Good-humoured foolish person. I should not wonder if it came from Avril (which in old Scotch is corrupted into Averil, and even Haver Hill), and had originally meant "April fool."

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toll two loud dismal strokes at regular intervals of a minute. What could it be? I fancied fire—fancied insurrection. I ran out into the passage and listened at Regy's door, all was still; then I listened at Mrs. Buller's, I heard her cough; surely, I thought, since she is awake, she would ring her bell if there were anything alarming for her in this tolling, it must be some other noise of the many they "have grown used to." So I went to bed again, but, of course, could not get another wink of sleep all night; for the bell only ceased tolling at my ear about six in the morning, and then I was too nervous to avail myself of the silence. "What on earth was the bell?" I asked Regy the first thing in the morning. "Oh, that was only the passing-bell! It was ordered to be rung during the night for an old lady who died the night before." This time, however, I had the satisfaction of seeing Mrs. Buller as angry as myself; for she also had been much alarmed.

Of course, yesterday I was quite ill, with the medicine, the sleeplessness, and the fright; and I thought I really could not stay any longer in a place where one is liable to such alarms. But now, as usual, one quiet night has given me hopes of more; and it would be a pity to return worse than I went away. I do not seem to myself to be nearly done; but Mr. Buller is sitting at my elbow with the chess-board, saying, "When you are ready I am ready." I am ready. Love to Babbie; I have your and her letter; but *must* stop.

III

September 13, 1844

DEAREST,—I have absolutely no composure of soul for writing just now. The fact is, I have undertaken far more this time than human discretion would

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

have dreamt of putting into one week ; knowing your horror of sweeps and carpet-beaters and "all that sort of thing," I would, in my romantic self-devotion, sweep all the chimneys and lift all the carpets before you came ; and had you arrived this day, as you first proposed, you would have found me still in a regular mess, threatening to thicken into "immortal smash." But by Thursday I hope to have "got everything satisfactorily arranged," as poor Plattnauer is always saying.

And there have been so many other things to take me up, besides the sweeps, etc. Almost every evening somebody has been here. The evening of the Bullers' departure Jenkin's Hen¹ came, pale as a candle, with a red circle round each eye which was very touching ;—he had evidently been crying himself quite sick and sore. Lady Lewis² had invited him to dine with her ; but, "he could not go there, he could not eat any dinner, he was afraid to go home to his own silent house—he thought I could understand his feelings, and so had come to pass the evening with me." What a gift of understanding other people's feelings I am supposed to have—*moi* ! Oh, my dear, the cat produced two kittens in your bed this morning, and we have drowned them—and now she also thinks I can understand her feelings, and is coming about my feet mewling in a way that quite wrings my heart. Poor thing ! I never saw her take on so badly before.

Well ! but on Saturday night Helen had just gone to seek sugar for the tea when a rap came, which I preferred answering myself to allowing Plattnauer to answer it, and—oh Heavens !—what should I see in the

¹ Fleming. To "die the death of Jenkin's hen" expressed, in Annandale, the maximum of pusillanimity.

² The late C. Buller's aunt.

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dark opening? A little human phenomenon, in a triple-cornered hat! Bishop ***** again! I screamed, a good, genuine, horrified scream! Whereupon he stept in—and, as the devil would have it—on my bad toe! and then I uttered a series of screams which made Plattnauer savage with him for the rest of the evening. He had come up to seek himself a new assistant, the old one being promoted. There is no end to his calls to London! But he was plainly mortally afraid of Plattnauer, who as good as told him he was “one of the windbags,” and will not trouble us again I think while he is here.

Yesterday afternoon came Henry Taylor, but only for a few minutes; he had been unexpectedly “turned adrift on our shores,” and could only wait till a Wandsworth steamer should come up. I was very kind to him, and he looked as if he could have kissed me for being glad to see him—oh, how odd! I put on my bonnet and went with him to the boat; and he complimented me on going out without gloves or shawl. I was the first woman he had ever found in this world who could go out of her house without at least a quarter of an hour’s preparation! They have taken a house at Mortlake, near Richmond.

But there is no possibility of telling you all the things I have to tell at this writing. They will keep till you come. Only let me not forget to say there is an American letter come for John, which I send on by this day’s post.

Your letter, written apparently on Saturday, was not read by me till yesterday afternoon; the postman came so long after twelve when I had been under the imperative necessity to go out. Give my love to Mr. Baring.—Ever
your distracted

GOODY

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

IV

July 23, 1845

DEAREST,—It is all as well as could be expected. I arrived without accident, not even much tired, an hour and a half before I was looked for—in fact between five and six. Consequently there was nobody to meet me, and I had some difficulty in getting myself a car, and at the same time keeping watch over my trunk and dressing-box; the former indeed was getting itself coolly borne away by a porter amongst some other people's luggage, when I laid my hand on it, and indicated: Thus far shalt thou go but no farther. My uncle I met tumbling downstairs, with what speed he might, prepared for being kissed to death; then came Maggie; and lastly Babbie, flushed and embarrassed, and unsatisfactory-looking; for, alas! she had been all day preserving strawberries, and had not expected me so soon, and was not dressed: to be an unwise virgin, taken with one's lamp untrimmed, means here to be caught in *déshabillé*. A—— I have not seen yet—*tant mieux*, for I don't like him “the least in the world.” Johnnie has sunk away into “an unintelligible whinner.”¹

On the whole there is little “food for the young soul, Mr. Carlyle!” But *she* (as Mazzini insists on calling the soul, and I think with reason; making the soul into an *it* being—what shall I say?—a desecration, upon my honour)—“she” can do without visible food, like my leech, for all the while “she” is to abide in the place. And “one has always one's natural affections left.” And then “to give pleasure to others!” The compensation that lies in that under all circumstances! Ah!

¹ Some fool's speech to me, I forget whose.

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I am established in Mary's little room (off my uncle's) which they have made as tidy as possible for me. There is a tradition of "a little wee wifie that lived in a shoe"; but I am still more curiously lodged, for this room is for all the world like a boot, the bed occupying the heel of it, a little bed like a coffin.

In so new a predicament, of course I could not sleep; the best I made of it was a doze from time to time of a few minutes' duration, from which I started up with a sensation of horror, like what must have been felt by the victim of the Iron Shroud. For the rest, there was a cat opera, in which the *prima donna* had an organ that "bet the worl";¹ then there are some half-dozen of stout-lunged cocks, and a dog that lyrically recognises every passing event. Perhaps, like the pigs, I shall get used to it; if not I must just go all the sooner to Seaforth where there is at least a certain quiet.

My coachful of men turned out admirably, as silent as could be wished, yet not deficient in the courtesies of life. The old gentleman with moustachios and a red face was Colonel Cleveland, of the Artillery, "much distinguished in the wars." There was another old gentleman still more miraculous than Rio;² for he had one eye boiled, the other parboiled, no leg, and his mind boiled to jelly, and yet he got to Liverpool just as well as the rest of us. The little man opposite me, who was absorbed in Eugene Sue's female Bluebeard, was a German, and, pleased to see me reading his language, he gave me his pea-jacket to wrap my legs in, for we were all perished with cold. The English dandy with

¹ Annandale for "beat the world."

² Rio, a wandering, rather loud and headlong, but innocent-hearted, French friend, Neo-Catholic, etc., I believe is still living in Paris; a stranger here for twenty-five years now.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

the heaven-blue waistcoat slept the whole way, exactly in the attitude of "James" waiting for the Sylphide to come and kiss him ; but he might sleep long enough, I fancy, before any "bit of fascination" would take the trouble.

And now you must "excuse us the day." After such a night, I can neither "make wits,"¹ nor, what were more to the purpose, senses, for your gratification. I shall go and walk, and look at the *Great Britain* packet ; if one does not enlighten one's mind in the shipping department here, I see not how else one shall enlighten it.

Babbie has just knocked to beg I would give her love to you, and most sincere thanks for the Book,² the preface of which I read aloud to my uncle at breakfast ; and he pronounced it "very satirical"—a true speak !

God bless you, dear. I do not wish you to feel lonely, nor will you ; and yet I should not precisely like if you missed me none at all.—Your distracted

JANEKIN

V

August 16, 1845

DEAREST, — I never know whether a letter is welcomer when it arrives after having been impatiently waited for, or like yesterday's, "quite promiscuously," when I was standing on the broad basis of "Blessed are they who do not hope, for they shall not be disappointed !" I assure you I am not the only person obliged by your writing ; it makes a very palpable difference in my amiability throughout the day whether I have a letter to begin it with.

¹ Bölte's phrase for the sad operation of being with effort "witty."

² "Book," I suppose, will be *Life of Schiller*, 2nd edition.

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Last night we went, according to programme, to Mrs. A——'s and "it's but fair to state" that the drive there and back in the moonlight was the best of it. The party did me no ill, however; it was not a Unitarian crush like the last, but adapted to the size of the room: select, moreover, and with the crowning grace of an open window. There was an old gentleman who did the impossible to inspire me with a certain respect: Y—— they called him, and his glory consists in owning the Prince's Park, and throwing it open to "poors." Oh, what a dreadful little old man! He plied me with questions, and suggestions about you, till I was within a trifle of "putting my finger in the pipy o' im."¹ "How did Mr. Carlyle treat Oliver Cromwell's crimes?" "His what?" said I. "The atrocities he exercised on the Irish." "Oh, you mean massacring a garrison or two? All that is treated very briefly." "But Mr. Carlyle must feel a just horror of it." "Horror? Oh, none at all, I assure you! He regards it as the only means under the circumstances to save blood-shed." The little old gentleman bounced back in his chair, and spread out his two hands, like a duck about to swim, while there burst from his lips a groan that made everyone look at us. What had I said to their Mr. Y——? By-and-by the old gentleman returned to the charge. "Mr. Carlyle must be feeling much delighted about the Academical Schools?" "Oh no, he has been so absorbed in his own work lately that he has not been at leisure to be delighted about anything." "But, madam! a man may attend to his own work, and attend at the same time to questions of great public interest." "Do you think so? I don't." Another bounce on the chair. Then, with a sort of awe, as of

¹ Crying baby unappeasable. "Put your finger in ta pipie o't" (little windpipe), said some Highland body.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

a "demon more wicked than your wife,"¹ "Do you not think, madam, that more good might be done by taking up the history of the actual time than of past ages? Such a time as this, so full of improvements in arts and sciences, the whole face of Europe getting itself changed! Suppose Mr. Carlyle should bring out a yearly volume about all this?" This was Y——'s last flight of eloquence with me, for catching the eyes of a lady (your Miss L—— of "The Gladiator") fixed on me with the most ludicrous expression of sympathy, I fairly burst out laughing till the tears ran down; and when I had recovered myself, the old gentleman had turned for compensation to J. M——. J. had reasons for being civil to him which I had not, Mr. Y—— being his landlord; but he seemed to be answering him in his sleep while his waking thoughts were intent on an empty chair betwixt Geraldine and myself, and eventually he made it his own. As if to deprecate my confounding him with these Y——'s, he immediately began to speak in the most disrespectful manner of Mechanics' Institutes "and all that sort of thing"; and then we got on these eternal Vestiges of Creation,² which he termed, rather happily, "animated mud." Geraldine and Mrs. Paulet were wanting to engage him in a doctrinal discussion, which they are extremely fond of: "Look at Jane," suddenly exclaimed Geraldine, "she is quizzing us in her own mind. You must know" (to Mr. M——) "we cannot get Jane to care a bit about doctrines." "I should think not," said M——, with great vivacity; "Mrs. Carlyle is the most concrete woman that I have seen for a long while." "Oh," said Geraldine, "she puts all her wisdom

¹ Peter Nimmo's sermon on Ananias and Sapphira: "Tempted by some demon more wicked than his wife."

² Dull book (quasi-atheistic), much talked of then.

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into practice, and so never gets into scrapes." "Yes," said M—— in a tone significant of much, "to keep out of doctrines is the only way to keep out of scrapes." Was not that a creditable speech in a Unitarian?

Miss L—— is a frank, rather agreeable, woman, forty or thereabouts, who looks as if she had gone through a good deal of hardship; not "a domineering genius" by any means,¹ but with sense enough for all practical purposes, such as admiring you to the skies, and Cromwell too. The rest of the people were "chiefly musical, Mr. Carlyle." Mrs. A—— is very much fallen off in her singing since last year; I suppose from squalling so much to her pupils. She is to dine here to-day, and ever so many people besides, to meet those R——s. Doubtless we shall be "borne through with an honourable throughbearing";² but quietness is best.

And now I must go and walk, while the sun shines. Our weather here is very showery and cold. I heard a dialogue the other morning betwixt Mr. Paulet and his factotum, which amused me much. The factotum was mowing the lawn. Mr. Paulet threw up the breakfast-room window, and called to him: "Knolles! how looks my wheat?" "Very distressed indeed, sir." "Are we much fallen down?" "No, sir, but we are black, very black." "All this rain, I should have thought, would have made us fall down?" "Where the crops are heavy they are a good deal laid, sir, but it would take a vast of rain to lay us." "Oh, then, Knolles, it is because we are not powerful enough that we are not fallen down?" "Sir?" "It is because we are not rich enough?" "Beg

¹ Jeffrey? "Pooh! clever enough, but not a domineering genius!" (Poor Gray of the High School, Edinburgh, thirty years before.)

² Burgher minister's thanksgiving on a Sacramental occasion.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

pardon, sir, but I don't quite understand?" Mr. Paulet shut the window and returned to his breakfast. God keep you, dear.—Your own,
J. C.

VI

August 5, 1852

YOU recollect, dear, that Macready told me of two routes, recommending that by Frome as the quickest and least fatiguing; so I rendered myself at the Paddington station on Friday morning, with my night things in a bag on one arm and my "blessed"¹ in a basket on the other. He gave me no trouble, kept himself hidden and motionless till the train started, and then looked out cautiously, as much as to say, "Are we safe?" The journey to Frome was quite a rest after that morning's work (carrying down all the books from the top landing-place into the back parlour), and I descended from the train quite fresh for the thirty miles by coach.

But when I inquired about the coach to Sherborne, I was told there was none. "A coach passing through Sherborne passed through Frome without coming to the station at eleven in the morning," three hours before the time we were at; "no other since many months back." My first thought was, "What a mercy you were not with me!" my next that the Macreadys could not blame me for keeping them waiting; and then I "considered," like the piper's cow, and resolved not to stay all day and night at Frome, but to take a Yeovil coach, which started at five, and which could take me, I was told, to a wayside inn within eight miles of Sherborne, and there I hoped to find a fly "or something." Meanwhile I would proceed

¹ Dog Nero.

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to the town of Frome, a mile from the station, and get something to eat, and even to drink, "feeling it my duty" to keep my heart up by all needful appliances. I left my little bag at the station, where the coach came, and set my dog quite free, and we pursued our way as calmly and naturally as if we had known where we were going.

Frome is a dull, dirty-looking place, full of plumbers; one could fancy the Bennett controversy¹ must have been a godsend to it. I saw several inns, and chose "The George" for its name's sake. I walked in and asked to have some cold meat and a pint bottle of Guinness's porter. They showed me to an ill-aired parlour, and brought me some cold lamb that the flies had been buzzing round for a week—even Nero disdained to touch it. I ate bread, however, and drank all the porter; and "the cha-arge"² for that feeble refecton was 2s. 6d.! Already I had paid one pound eight and sixpence for the train. It was going to be a most unexpectedly costly journey to me. But for that reflection I could almost have laughed at my forlorn position there.

The inn and town were "so disagreeable" that I went presently back to the station, preferring to wait there. One of the men who had informed me about the coach came to me, as I was sitting on a bench, and remarked on the beauty of the scene, especially of some scarlet

¹ Something in the newspaper.

² In my first voyage to London (1824, by Leith smack) a certain very rustic-looking, but polite and quiet old baronet, called Sir David Milne, slept in the same cabin with me; and there and on deck was an amusing study. Courteous, solemn, yet awkward, dull; chewing away the *r* when he spoke, which indeed was seldom, and then mainly in the way of economic inquiry to passengers who knew London—what you could do there, see, eat, etc.; and to every item, the farther question: "And what is the cha-arge (charge)?"

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

beans that were growing in his own piece of garden. "Ah," he said, "I have lived in London, and I have lived abroad ; I have been here and there, backwards and forwards, while I was in service with them as never could rest ; but I am satisfied now that the only contentment for man is in growing his own VEGETABLE !" "Look at them beans," he said again. "Well, to-morrow they'll be ready, and I'll be pulling them, and boiling them, and eating them—and such a taste ! No agriculture like that in Piccadilly !" Then he looked sympathisingly at me and said, "I'm going to get you something you'll like, and that's a glass of cool, fresh, clear water ;" and he went away with a jug to his garden and fetched some water from a little spring well and a great handful of mignonette. "There ! there's something sweet for you, and here's splendid water, that you won't find the like of in Piccadilly !" I asked him "how it was going with Mr. Bennett?" "Huh, I hear no complaints, but I goes to neither one nor other of them, and follows my own notions. I finds agriculture the thing !" He would have been worth a hundred pounds to Dickens, that man.

I had the coach all to myself for awhile ; then a young gentleman got in, who did exactly the right thing by me, neither spoke to me nor looked at me till we stopped at Castle Carey (Yeovil is pronounced Youghal, Carey Carry. I grew quite frightened that I had been somehow transported into Ireland). There the young gentleman went into the inn, and said to me first, "Excuse the liberty I take in asking, but would you take anything—a little wine and water?" I thought that very polite ; but I was to meet with "something more exquisite still" before I got to Sherborne. At the "Sparkford" Inn, eight miles from Sherborne, I got out and asked, had they a fly?

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“Yes, but one of its wheels was broken, and it was gone to be mended!” “Had they any other conveyance that was whole—a gig or cart?” “Yes, they had a nice little gig, and I should have the loan of a cloak to keep me warm” (the evening was rather chill). So I went in, and sat down in a parlour; where an old gentleman was finishing off with bread-and-cheese. He soon made himself master of my case, and regretted he was not going back to Sherborne that night, as then he would have taken me in his carriage; and presently he offered something else more practical, viz., to try to recover my parasol (my mother’s, the one she bought with the sovereign you gave her,¹ and which I had got new covered), left stupidly on the roof of the coach, and never recollected till the coach, with its four horses, had thundered past the window! If the landlady would tell the coachman about it next day, and get it there, he, the old gentleman, would bring it to Sherborne House. I went into the lobby to tell the landlady, some five or eight minutes after the coach had started, and told her, in presence of a gentleman, who was preparing to start in a barouchette with two horses. He looked hard at me, but said nothing; and a minute or two after I saw him drive past the window. Some twenty minutes after, I started myself, in a little gig, with a brisk little horse, and silent driver. Nothing could be more pleasant than so purring through quiet roads, in the dusk, with the moon coming out. I felt as if I were reading about myself in a Miss Austen novel. But it got beyond Miss Austen when, at the end of some three miles, before a sort of carrier’s inn, the gentleman of the barouchette stepped into the middle of the road, making a sort of military signal to my driver, which he repeated

¹ A sovereign to each of them, on returning home with a pocketful from my “first lecture.” Ah, me!

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with impatience when the man did not at once draw up ! I sat confounded, expecting what he would do next. We had halted ; the gentleman came to my side, and said, exactly as in a book : “ Madam, I have the happiness of informing you that I have reclaimed your parasol ; and it lies here in my carriage ready to be restored ! ” “ But how on earth ? ” I asked. “ Madam, I judged that it would be more pleasing for you to take the parasol along with yourself than to trust to its being brought by the other gentleman ; so I just galloped my horses, overtook the coach as it was leaving this court, reclaimed the parasol, and have waited here, knowing you could take no other road to Sherborne, for the happiness of presenting it to you ! ”—To an ostler—“ Bring the parasol ! ” It was brought, and handed to me. And then I found myself making a speech in the same style, caught by the infection of the thing. I said : “ Sir, this day has been full of mischances for me, but I regard the recovery of my parasol so unexpectedly as a good omen, and have a confidence that I shall now reach my destination in safety. Accept my thanks, though it is impossible to give any adequate expression to my sense of your courtesy ! ” I never certainly made so long and formal a speech in my life. And how I came to make it anything like it I can’t imagine, unless it were under mesmerism ! We bowed to each other like first cousins of Sir Charles Grandison, and I purred on. “ Do you know that gentleman ? ” I asked my driver. “ Never saw him before.”

I found Sherborne House without difficulty ; and a stately, beautiful house it was, and a kind welcome it had for me. The mistake had been discovered in the morning, and great anxiety felt all day as to my fate. I was wonderfully little tired, and able to make them all (her too) laugh with my adventures. But I must positively

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interrupt this penny-a-lining, and go to bed. It is true to the letter, all I have told.

My two days at Sherborne House were as happy as could possibly be with that fearfully emaciated, dying woman before my eyes. They were all doing their best to be cheerful—herself as cheerful as the others. She never spoke of her death, except in taking leave of me ; when she took my head in her hand and kissed it, and gave me her solemn blessing, and asked me to come again with you, to see William and the children, when she should be gone. That was a dreadful trial of my composure. I am so glad I went, it pleased her and all of them so much !

The journey back by Dorchester went all right, and was less expensive, for I came by the second-class, and so saved the nine shillings my gig had cost me. It was a weary long way, however, from a quarter before nine till half after seven flying along in one shape or other, with only ten minutes' delay (at Southampton). My only adventure on the road back was falling in with a young unfortunate female in the Chelsea boat, the strangest compound of angel and devil I ever set eyes on, and whom, had I been a great, rich lady, I should decidedly have—brought home to tea with me and tried “to *save*.” The helpless thought that I had nothing to offer her instead alone prevented me. I could not leave her however without speaking to her, and my words were so moving, through my own emotion, that she rushed from me in tears to the other side of the vessel. You may feel a certain curiosity to know what I said. I only recollect something about “her mother, alive or dead, and her evident superiority to the life she was leading.” She said, “Do you think so ma’am?” with a look of bitter wretchedness and forced gaiety that I shall never forget.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

She was trying to smile defiantly, when she burst into tears and ran away.

I made a frantic appeal to the workmen the other day, since when we have been getting on a little more briskly. The spokesman of them, a dashing young man, whom you have not seen, answered me : " My dear (!) madam, you must have patience, indeed you must ; it will be all done—some day ! " The weather is most lovely. *Monsieur le Thermomètre* pretty generally at 70°.

My health continues wonderfully good. To-day I dine at the Brookfields', for what poor Helen used to call " a fine change. "—Ever yours affectionately,

JANE W. C.

VII

Notes of a Sitter-Still

July 11, 1858

BOTKIN (what a name !), your Russian translator, has called. Luckily Charlotte had been forewarned to admit him if he came again. He is quite a different type from Tourgueneff, though a tall one, this one too. I should say he must be a Cossack—not that I ever saw a Cossack or heard one described, instinct is all I have for it. He has flattened high-boned cheeks—a nose flattened towards the point—small, very black, deep-set eyes, with thin semi-circular eyebrows—a wide thin mouth—a complexion whity-grey, and the skin of his face looked thick enough to make a saddle of ! He does not possess himself like Tourgueneff, but bends and gesticulates like a Frenchman.

He burst into the room with wild expressions of his " admiration for Mr. Carlyle. " I begged him to be seated, and he declared " Mr. Carlyle was the man for Russia. "

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I tried again and again to "enchain" a rational conversation, but nothing could I get out of him but rhapsodies about you in the frightfullest English that I ever heard out of a human head ! It is to be hoped that (as he told me) he reads English much better than he speaks it, else he must have produced an inconceivable translation of "Hero Worship." Such as it is, anyhow, "a large deputation of the students of St. Petersburg" waited on him (Botkin), to thank him in the strongest terms for having translated for them "Hero Worship," and made known to them Carlyle. And even the young Russian ladies now read "Hero Worship" and "unnerstants it thor-lie." He was all in a perspiration when he went away and so was I !

I should like to have asked him some questions ; for example, how he came to know of your works (he had told me he had to send to England for them "at extreem cost"), but it would have been like asking a cascade ! The best that I could do for him I did. I gave him a photograph of you, and put him up to carrying it in the top of his hat !

I don't think I ever told you the surprising visit I had from David Aitken¹ and Bess. I was so ill when I wrote after that all details were omitted. Charlotte had come to say one of the latch-keys was refusing to act. I went to see what the matter was, and when we opened the door, behold, David at the bottom of the steps, and Bess preparing to knock ! "Is this Mrs. Carlyle's ?" she asked of myself, while I was gazing dumbfounded. "My goodness !" cried I. At the sound of my voice she knew me—not till then—though at my own door ! and certainly the recognition was the furthest from complimentary I

¹ Minister of Minto and wife (once Bess Stoddart), Bradfute's niece and heiress.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

ever met. She absolutely staggered, screaming out, "God preserve me, Jane! That you?" Pleasant! David coming up the steps brought a little calm into the business, and the call got itself transacted better or worse.

They were on their way home from Italy. Both seemed rather more human than last time, especially David, whose face had taken an expression of "Peace on earth and goodwill unto men." Bess had lost a tooth or two, was rather thinner, and her eyes hollower; otherwise much the same.

They invited me very kindly to Minto, and he seemed really in earnest.

July 16

SURELY, dear, the shortest, most unimportant note you can write is worth a bit of paper all to itself? Such a mixed MS., with flaps too, may be a valuable literary curiosity "a hundred years hence," but it is a trial of patience to the present reader, who, on eagerly opening a letter from you, had not calculated on having to go through a process like seeking the source of the Niger, in a small way.

For the rest, you don't at all estimate my difficulties in writing a letter every day, when I am expected to tell how I am, and when "I's ashamed to say I's no better." Dispense me from saying anything whatever about my health; let me write always "Notes" and it would be easy for me to send you a daily letter. As easy at least as it is to be lively with the callers, who go away in doubt (like George Cooke) "whether I am the most stoical of women, or whether there is nothing in the world the matter with me?"

But you want to be told how I sleep, &c. &c.; and

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can't you understand that having said twice, thrice, call it four times, "I am sleeping hardly any, I am very nervous and suffering" the fifth time that I have the same account to repeat, "horrible is the thought to me," and I take refuge in silence. Wouldn't you do the same? Suppose, instead of putting myself in the omnibus the other day, and letting myself be carried in unbroken silence to Richmond and back again, I had sat at home writing to you all the thoughts that were in my head? But that I never would have done; not a hundredth part of the thoughts in my head have ever been or ever will be spoken or written—as long as I keep my senses, at least.

Only don't you, "the apostle of silence," find fault with me for putting your doctrine in practice. There are days when I must hold my peace or speak things all from the lips outwards, or things that, being of the nature of self-lamentation, had better never be spoken.

My cold in the meanwhile? It is still carrying on, till Lonsdale coom,¹ in the shape of cough and a stuffed head; but it does not hurt me anywhere, and I no longer need to keep to the house; the weather being warm enough, I ride in an omnibus every day more or less.

All last night it thundered; and there was one such clap as I never heard in my life, preceded by a flash that covered my book for a moment with blue light (I was reading in bed about three in the morning, and you can't think what a wild effect that blue light on the book had!). To-day it is still thundering in the distance, and soft, large, hot drops of rain falling. What of the three tailors?

I could swear you never heard of Madame — de —. But she has heard of you; and if you were in the habit of thanking God "for the blessing made to fly over your head," you might offer a modest thanksgiving for the

¹ Cumberland old woman.

Particular Wife to Particular Husband

honour that stunning lady did you in galloping madly all round Hyde Park in chase of your "brown wide-awake" the last day you rode there; no mortal could predict what the result would be if she came up with you. To seize your bridle and look at you till she was satisfied was a trifle to what she was supposed capable of. She only took to galloping after you when more legitimate means had failed.

She circulates everywhere, this madcap "Frenchwoman." She met "the Rev. John" (Barlow), and said, when he was offering delicate attentions, "There is just one thing I wish you to do for me—to take me to see Mr. Carlyle." "Tell me to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to dance a polka with you," said Barlow, aghast, "and I would dare it, though I have not the honour of his acquaintance; but take anybody to Mr. Carlyle—impossible!" "That silly old Barlow won't take me to Carlyle," said the lady to George Cooke; "you must do it then." "Gracious heavens!" said George Cooke; "ask me to take you up to the Queen, and introduce you to her, and I would do it, and 'take the six months' imprisonment,' or whatever punishment was awarded me; but take anybody to Mr. Carlyle—impossible!"

Soon after this, George Cooke met her riding in the Park, and said, "I passed Mr. Carlyle a little way on, in his 'brown wide-awake.'" The lady lashed her horse and set off in pursuit, leaving her party out of sight, and went all round the Park at full gallop looking out for the wide-awake. She is an authoress in a small way, this charming Frenchwoman; and is the wife of a newspaper editor at Paris, who "went into the country" (Miss F. told me) "and brought back a flowerpot full of earth, and, on the strength of that, put de —— to his name of Monsieur ——."

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But the absurdest fact about her is, that, being a "Frenchwoman," she is the reputed daughter of Lord F. and a Mrs. G. ! It is in Lord F.'s house that she stays here. Miss F. also declares she was a celebrated singer at Munich. But Miss F. is a very loose talker, and was evidently jealous of the sensation the lady produced by her wit and eccentricities.

Will that suit you?

XIII

THE WITTY CANON

The Rev. Sydney Smith to Lady Holland ♪ ♪

(Extracts)

December 9, 1807

WAR, my dear Lady Holland, is natural to women, as well as men—at least with their own sex! A dreadful controversy has broken out in Bath, whether tea is most effectually sweetened by lump or pounded sugar; and the worst passions of the human mind are called into action by the pulverists and the lumpists. I have been pressed by ladies on both sides to speak in favour of their respective theories, at the Royal Institution, which I have promised to do.

September 9, 1808

I TAKE the liberty to send you two brace of grouse, —curious, because killed by a Scotch metaphysician; in other and better language, they are mere ideas, shot by other ideas, out of a pure intellectual notion, called a gun.

October 8, 1808

MY lot is now fixed and my heritage fixed,—most probably. But you may choose to make me a bishop, and if you do, I think I shall never do you dis-

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credit ; for I believe it is out of the power of lawn and velvet, and the crisp hair of dead men fashioned into a wig, to make me a dishonest man ; but if you do not, I am perfectly content.

June 24, 1809

I HAVE laid down two rules for the country : first, not to smite the partridge ; for if I fed the poor, and comforted the sick, and instructed the ignorant, yet I should be nothing worth, if I smote the partridge. If anything ever endangers the Church, it will be the strong propensity to shooting for which the clergy are remarkable. Ten thousand good shots dispersed over the country do more harm to the cause of religion than the arguments of Voltaire and Rousseau. The squire never reads, but is it possible he can believe *that* religion to be genuine whose ministers destroy his game? . .

Mrs. Sydney is all rural bustle, impatient for the parturition of hens and pigs ; I wait patiently, knowing all will come in due season !

September 9, 1809

I DARE say it cost you much to part with Charles ; but in the present state of the world, it is better to bring up our young ones to war than to peace. I burn gunpowder every day under the nostrils of my little boy, and talk to him often of fighting, to put him out of conceit with civil sciences, and prepare him for the evil times which are coming !

December 8, 1809

I HAVE been long intending to write you a letter of congratulation. There is more happiness in a multitude of children than safety in a multitude of

The Witty Canon

counsellors ; and if I were a rich man, I should like to have twenty children. . . .

I hear you have a good tutor for Henry, which I am exceedingly glad of. Lord Grey has met with no tutor as yet ; tutors do not like to go beyond Adrian's Wall. You are aware that it is necessary to fumigate Scotch tutors : they are excellent men, but require this little preliminary caution. They are apt also to break the church windows, and get behind a hedge and fling stones at the clergyman of the parish, and betray other little symptoms of irreligion ; but these you must not mind. Send me word if he has any tricks of this kind. I have seen droves of them, and know how to manage them.

1809

I MEAN to make some maxims, like Rochefoucauld, and to preserve them. My first is this :—After having lived half their lives respectable, many men get tired of honesty, and many women of propriety.

January 27, 1810

I CANNOT say how much I like the said Earl [Grey] ; —a fine nature, a just and vigorous understanding, a sensitive disposition, and infirm health. These are his leading traits. His excellencies are courage, discretion, and practical sense ; his deficiency, a want of executive coarseness.

November 3, 1810

WE liked Mrs. —. It was wrong, at her time of life, to be circumvented by —'s diagrams ; but there is some excuse in the novelty of the attack,

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as I believe she is the first lady that ever fell a victim to algebra, or that was geometrically led from the paths of discretion.

May 23, 1811

HOW very odd, dear Lady Holland, to ask me to dine with you on Sunday, the 9th, when I am coming to stay with you from the 5th to the 12th! It is like giving a gentleman an assignation for Wednesday, when you are going to marry him on the preceding Sunday,—an attempt to combine the stimulus of gallantry with the security of connubial relations. I do not propose to be guilty of the slightest infidelity to you while I am at Holland House, except you dine in town; and then it will not be infidelity, but spirited recrimination.

September 17, 1813

FEW events are of so little consequence as the fecundity of a clergyman's wife; still your kind dispositions towards me justify me in letting you know that Mrs. Sydney and her new-born son are both extremely well. His name will be Grafton, and I shall bring him up a Methodist and a Tory.

June 25, 1814

I LIKED London better than ever I liked it before, and simply, I believe, from water-drinking. Without this, London is stupefaction and inflammation. It is not the love of wine, but thoughtlessness and unconscious imitation: other men poke out their hands for the revolving wine, and one does the same, without thinking of it. All people above the condition of labourers are ruined by excess of stimulus and nourishment, clergy included. I never yet saw any gentleman who ate and drank as little as was reasonable.

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1815

NOW pray do settle in England, and remain quiet ; depend upon it, it is the most agreeable place. I have heard five hundred travelled people assert that there is no such agreeable house in Europe as Holland House : why should you be the last person to be convinced of this, and the first to make it true ?

February 2, 1816

MY sister was a most amiable and enlightened woman ; she had run through all the stamina of constitution nature had allotted her, and died of old age, in youth. The loss of a person whom I would have cultivated as a friend, if nature had not given her to me as a relation, is a serious evil.

July 31, 1817

IT is very curious to consider in what manner Horner gained, in so extraordinary a degree, the affections of such a number of persons of both sexes,—all ages, parties, and ranks in society ; for he was not remarkably good-tempered, nor particularly lively and agreeable ; and an inflexible politician on the unpopular side. The causes are, his high character for probity, honour, and talents ; his fine countenance ; the benevolent interest he took in the concerns of all his friends ; his simple and gentlemanlike manners ; his untimely death.

October 1, 1823

I WAS prepared to set off for London, when a better account arrived from Dr. Bond. I think you mistake Bond's character in supposing he could be influenced by

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partridges. He is a man of very independent mind, with whom pheasants at least, or perhaps turkeys, are necessary.

Nothing can be more disgusting than an Oratorio. How absurd, to see five hundred people fiddling like madmen about the Israelites in the Red Sea! Lord Morpeth pretends to say he was pleased, but I see a great change in him since the music-meeting. Pray tell Luttrell he did wrong not to come to the music. It tired me to death; it would have pleased him. He is a melodious person, and much given to sacred music. In his fits of absence I have heard him hum the Hundredth Psalm! (Old Version).

October 19, 1823

THE Duchess wrote me a very amusing note in answer to mine, for which I am much obliged. All duchesses seem agreeable to clergymen; but she would really be a very clever, agreeable woman, if she were married to a neighbouring vicar; and I should often call upon her.

November 6, 1827

JEFFREY has been here with his adjectives, who always travel with him. His throat is giving way; so much wine goes down it, so many million words leap over it, how can it rest? Pray make him a judge; he is a truly great man, and is very heedless of his own interests. I lectured him on his romantic folly of wishing his friends to be preferred before himself, and succeeded, I think, in making him a little more selfish.

BRISTOL, February 17, 1828

AN extremely comfortable prebendal house; seven-stall stables and room for four carriages, so that I can hold all your *cortège* when you come; looks to the

The Witty Canon

south, and is perfectly snug and parsonic ; masts of West-Indiamen seen from the windows. The colleagues I have found here are a Mr. Ridley, cousin to Sir Matthew ; a very good-natured, agreeable man,—deaf, tottering, worldly-minded, vain as a lawyer, noisy, and perfectly good-natured and obliging. The little Dean I have not seen ; he is as small as the Bishop, they say. It is supposed that the one of these ecclesiastics elevated upon the shoulders of the other, would fall short of the Archbishop of Canterbury's wig. The Archbishop of York is forced to go down on his knees to converse with the Bishop of Bristol, just as an elephant kneels to receive its rider.

December 14, 1829

I TOLD — if he would have patience he would have a little girl at last. I might have said, he might have twenty little girls. What is there to prevent him from having a family sufficient to exasperate the placid Malthus ?

Luttrell came over for a day, from whence I know not, but I thought not from good pastures ; at least, he had not his usual soup-and-pattie look. There was a forced smile upon his countenance, which seemed to indicate plain roast and boiled, and a sort of apple-pudding depression, as if he had been staying with a clergyman.

May 1831

I MET John Russell at Exeter. The people along the road were very much disappointed by his smallness. I told them he was much larger before the Bill was thrown out, but was reduced by excessive anxiety about the people. This brought tears into their eyes !

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July 1831

PHILOSOPHER MALTHUS came here last week. I got an agreeable party for him of unmarried people. There was only one lady who had had a child; but he is a good-natured man, and, if there are no appearances of approaching fertility, is civil to every lady. Malthus is a real moral philosopher, and I would almost consent to speak as inarticulately, if I could think and act as wisely.

I sit in my beautiful study, looking upon a thousand flowers, and read agreeable books, in order to keep up arguments with Lord Holland and Allen. I thank God heartily for my comfortable situation in my old age,—above my deserts, and beyond my former hopes.

ABBEVILLE, October 2, 1835

THERE is a family of English people living here who have been here for five years. They stopped to change horses, liked the place, and have been here ever since: father, mother, two handsome daughters, and some young children. I should think it not unlikely that one of the daughters will make a nuptial alliance with the waiter, or give her hand to the son of the landlord, in order to pay the bill. . .

We are well, and are going to sit down to a dinner at five francs a-head. We are going regularly through the Burgundy wines,—the most pernicious, and of course the best: Macon the first day, Chablis the second—both excellent; to-day Volnay.

June 1840

I AM giving a rout this evening to the only three persons I have yet discovered at Brighton. I have had handbills printed to find other London people, but

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I believe there are none. I shall stay till the 28th. You *must* allow the Chain Pier to be a great luxury ; and I think all rich and rational people living in London should take small doses of Brighton from time to time. There cannot be a better place than this to refresh metropolitan gentlemen and ladies, wearied with bad air, falsehood, and lemonade.

November 6, 1842

I HAVE not the heart, when an amiable lady says, “Come to ‘Semiramis’ in my box,” to decline ; but I got bolder at a distance. “Semiramis” would be to me pure misery. I love music very little,—I hate acting ; I have the worst opinion of Semiramis herself, and the whole thing (I cannot help it) seems so childish and so foolish that I cannot abide it. Moreover, would be it rather out of etiquette for a Canon of St. Paul’s to go to an opera ; and where etiquette prevents me from doing things disagreeable to myself, I am a perfect martinet.

All these things considered, I am sure you will not be a Semiramis to me, but let me off.

XIV

CHARACTERS

Mr. Gabriel Bullock offers his heart to Mrs. Margaret
Clark ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

(To her I very much respect, Mrs. Margaret Clark)

LOVELY, and oh that I could write loving Mrs. Margaret Clark, I pray you let Affection excuse Presumption. Having been so happy as to enjoy the Sight of your sweet Countenance and comely Body, sometimes when I had occasion to buy Treacle or Liquorish Power at the apothecary's shop, I am so enamoured with you, that I can no more keep close my flaming Desire to become your Servant. And I am the more bold now to write to your sweet self, because I am now my own Man, and may match where I please ; for my Father is taken away ; and now I am come to my Living, which is ten yard Land, and a House ; and there is never a Yard Land in our Field but is as well worth ten Pound a Year as a Thief's worth a Halter ; and all my Brothers and Sisters are provided for : besides I have good Household Stuff, though I say it, both Brass and Pewter, Linnens and Woollens ; and though my House be thatched, yet if you and I match, it shall go

Characters

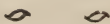
hard but I will have one half of it slated. If you shall think well of this Motion, I will wait upon you as soon as my new Cloaths is made, and Hay-Harvest is in. I could, though I say it, have good Matches in our Town ; but my Mother (God's Peace be with her) charged me upon her Death-Bed to marry a Gentlewoman, one who had been well trained up in Sowing and Cookery. I do not think but that if you and I can agree to marry, and lay our Means together, I shall be made grand Jury-man e'er two or three Years come about, and that will be a great Credit to us. If I could have got a Messenger for Sixpence, I would have sent one on Purpose, and some Trifle or other for a Token of my Love ; but I hope there is nothing lost for that neither. So hoping you will take this Letter in good Part, and answer it with what Care and Speed you can, I rest and remain,

Yours, if my own, MR. GABRIEL BULLOCK,
now my father is dead.

SWEPSTON, LEICESTERSHIRE

When the Coal Carts come, I shall send oftener ; and may come in one of them my self.

Sir John Dalrymple details his ill-luck



(To Admiral Dalrymple)

CRANSTON, *January 1, 1772*

MY DEAR SIR,—Your shirts are safe. I have made many attempts upon them ; but Bess, who has in honesty what she wants in temper, keeps them in safety for you.

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You ask me what I have been doing? To the best of my memory, what has passed since I came home is as follows.

Finding the roof bad, I sent slaters, at the peril of their necks, to repair it. They mended three holes, and made thirty themselves.

I pulled down as many walls round the house as would have fortified a town. This was in summer : but now that winter is come, I would give all the money to put them up again, that it cost me to take them down.

I thought it would give a magnificent air to the old hall, to throw the passage into it. After it was done, I went out of town to see how it looked. It was night when I went into it ; the wind blew out the candle from the over-size of the room ; upon which, I ordered the partition to be built up again, that I might not die of cold in the midst of summer.

I ordered the old timber to be thinned ; to which, perhaps, the love of lucre a little contributed. The workmen, for every tree they cut, destroyed three, by letting them fall on each other. I received a momentary satisfaction from hearing that the carpenter I employed had cut off his thumb in felling a tree. But this pleasure was soon allayed, when, upon examining his measure, I found that he had measured false, and cheated me of *20 per cent.*

Instead of saddle-horses I bought mares, and had them covered with an Arabian. When I went, some months after, to mount them, the groom told me, I should kill the foals ; and now I walk on foot, with the stable full of horses, unless when, with much humility, I ask to be admitted into the chaise, which is generally refused me.

Remembering, with a pleasing complacency, the Watcombe pigs, I paid thirty shillings for a sow with

Characters

pig. My wife starved them. They ran over to a mad-man, called Lord Adam Gordon, who distrained them for damage ; and the mother, with ten helpless infants, died of bad usage.

Loving butter much, and cream more, I bought two Dutch cows, and had plenty of both. I made my wife a present of two more : she learned the way to market for their produce ; and I have never got a bowl of cream since.

I made a fine hay-stack ; but quarreled with my wife as to the manner of drying the hay, and building the stack. The hay-stack took fire ; by which I had the double mortification of losing my hay, and finding my wife had more sense than myself.

I kept no plough ; for which I thank my Maker ; because then I must have wrote this Letter from a gaol.

I paid twenty pounds for a dunghill, because I was told it was a good thing ; and, now, I would give anybody twenty shillings to tell me what to do with it.

I built, and stocked a pigeon-house ; but the cats watched below, the hawks hovered above ; and pigeon-soup, roasted pigeon, or cold pigeon-pie, have I never seen since.

I fell to drain a piece of low ground behind the house ; but I hit upon the tail of the rock, and drained the well of the house ; by which I can get no water for my victuals.

I entered into a great project for selling lime, upon a promise from one of my own farmers to give me land off his farm. But when I went to take off the ground, he laughed, said he had choused the Lawyer, and exposed me to a dozen law-suits for breach of bargains, which I could not perform.

I fattened black cattle and sheep ; but could not agree

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with the butchers about the price. From mere economy, we ate them ourselves, and almost killed all the family with surfeits.

I bought two score of six-year old wethers for my own table ; but a butcher, who rented one of the fields, put my mark upon his own carrion sheep ; by which I have been living upon carrion all the summer.

I brewed much beer ; but the small turned sour, and the servants drank all the strong.

I found a ghost in the house, whose name was M'Alister, a pedlar, that had been killed in one of the rooms at the top of the house two centuries ago. No servant would go on an errand after the sun was set, for fear of M'Alister, which obliged me to send off one set of my servants. Soon after the housekeeper, your old friend Mrs. Brown, died, aged 90 ; and then the belief ran, that another ghost was in the house, upon which many of the new set of servants begged leave to quit the house, and got it.

In one thing only I have succeeded. I have quarreled with all my neighbours ; so that, with a dozen gentlemen's seats in my view, I stalk alone like a lion in a desert.

I thought I should have been happy with my tenants, because I could be insolent to them without their being insolent to me. But they paid me no rent ; and in a few days I shall have above one half of the very few friends I have in the country in a prison.

Such being the pleasures of a country life, I intend to quit them all in about a month, to submit to the mortification of spending the spring in London, where, I am happy to hear, we are to meet. But I am infinitely happier to hear that Mrs. Dalrymple is doing so well. May God preserve her long to you ! for she is a fine creature.

Characters

Just when I was going to you last spring, I received a Letter from Bess, that she was dying. I put off my journey to Watcombe, and almost killed myself with posting to Scotland, where I found Madam in perfect good health.—Yours always, my dear Jack,

JOHN DALRYMPLE

Sir Hew Dalrymple recommends Dishington for pre-
ferment      

(To Sir Lawrence Dundas)

WALZELL, *May 24, 1775*

DEAR SIR,—Having spent a long life in pursuit of pleasure and health, I am now retired from the world in poverty and with the gout ; so, joining with Solomon, that, “all is vanity and vexation of spirit,” I go to church and say my prayers.

I assure you that most of us religious people reap some little satisfaction, in hoping that you wealthy voluptuaries have a fair chance of being damned to all eternity ; and that Dives shall call out for a drop of water to Lazarus, one drop of which he seldom tasted when he had the twelve Apostles in his cellar.¹

Now, sir, that doctrine being laid down, I wish to give you, my friend, a loophole to creep through. Going to church last Sunday, as usual, I saw an unknown face in the pulpit, and rising up to prayers, as others do upon like occasions, I began to look round the church to see if there were any pretty girls there, when my attention was attracted by the foreign accent of the parson. I gave him my attention, and had my devotion awakened

¹ Twelve hogsheads of claret.

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by the most pathetic prayer I ever heard. This made me all attention to the sermon ; a finer discourse never came from the lips of a man. I returned in the afternoon, and heard the same preacher exceed his morning work by the finest chain of reasoning, conveyed by the most eloquent expressions. I immediately thought of what Agrippa said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." I sent to ask the man of God to honour my roof and dine with me. I asked him of his country, and what not ; I even asked him if his sermons were his own composition, which he affirmed they were ; I assured him I believed it, for never man had spoke or wrote so well. "My name is Dishington," said he. "I am an assistant to an old minister in the Orkneys, who enjoys a fruitful benefice of £50 a year, out of which I am allowed £20 for preaching and instructing 1,200 people who live in two separate Islands ; out of which I pay £1, 5s. to the boatman to transport me from the one to the other. I should be happy could I continue in that terrestrial paradise ; but we have a great Lord who has many little people soliciting him for many little things that he can do and that he cannot do ; and if my minister dies, his succession is too great a prize not to raise up many powerful rivals to baulk my hope of preferment."

I asked him if he possessed any other wealth. "Yes," said he, "I married the prettiest girl in the island ; she has blessed me with three children, and as we are both young, we may expect more. Besides, I am so beloved in the island, that I have all my peats brought home carriage free."

This is my story,—now to the prayer of my petition. I never before envied you the possession of the Orkneys, which I now do only to provide for this eloquent innocent apostle.





Characters

The sun has refused your barren isles his kindly influence ; do not deprive them of so pleasant a preacher ; let not so great a treasure be forever lost to the damned inhospitable country ; for, I assure you, were the Archbishop of Canterbury to hear him, or hear of him, he would not do less than make him an archdeacon. The man has but one weakness, that of preferring the Orkneys to all the earth.

This way, and no other, you have a chance for Salvation. Do this man good, and he will pray for you. This will be a better purchase than your Irish Estate, or the Orkneys. I think it will help me forward too, since I am the man who told you of the man so worthy and deserving ; so pious, so eloquent, and whose prayers may do so much good.—Till I hear from you on this head, yours, in all meekness, love and benevolence,

H. D.

P.S.—Think what an unspeakable pleasure it will be, to look down from Heaven, and see Rigby, Masterton, all the Campbells and nabobs, swimming in fire and brimstone, while you are sitting with Whitefield and his old women, looking beautiful, frisking and singing ; all which you may have by settling this man, after the death of the present incumbent.

A Welsh gentleman obtains a situation for his son
in the East India House    

(To the Honourable Board of Directors of the
East India Co.)

GENTLEMEN,—I have a parcel of fine boys, but not much cash to provide for them. I had intended my eldest son for the Church, but I find he is

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more likely to kick a church down than support it. I sent him to the University, but he could not submit himself to the college rules, and, on being reproved by his tutors, he took it up in the light of an affair of honour, and threatened to call them to account for it. All my plans for his welfare being thus disconcerted, I asked him if he had formed any for himself; he replied he meant to go to India. I then inquired if he had any interest, at which question he looked somewhat foolish, and replied in the negative. Now, gentlemen, I know no more of you than you do of me. I therefore may appear to you not much wiser than my son. I can only say that he is of Welsh extraction for many generations, and, as my first-born, I flatter myself, has not degenerated. He is six feet high, of an athletic make, and bold and intrepid as a lion. If you like to see him I will equip him as a gentleman, and, I am, Gentlemen, etc.

Shelley (at school) prepares a firm of publishers for
the worst ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Longman & Co.)




ETON COLLEGE, *May 7, 1809*

GENTLEMEN,—It is my intention to complete and publish a Romance, of which I have already written a large portion, before the end of July. My object in writing it was not pecuniary, as I am independent, being the heir of a gentleman of large fortune in the county of Sussex, and prosecuting my studies as an Oppidan at Eton; from the many leisure hours I have, I have taken an opportunity of indulging my favourite propensity

Characters

in writing. Should it produce any pecuniary advantages, so much the better for me, I do not expect it. If you would be so kind as to answer this, direct it to me at the Rev. George Bethell's. Might I likewise request the favour of secrecy until the Romance is published.—I am, your very humble servant, PERCY SHELLEY

Be so good as to tell me whether I shall send you the original manuscript when I have completed it or one corrected, etc.

Charles Dickens introduces Professor Felton to the great Dando     

LONDON, *July* 31, 1842

MY DEAR FELTON,—Of all the monstrous and incalculable amount of occupation that ever beset one unfortunate man, mine has been the most stupendous since I came home. The dinners I have had to eat, the places I have had to go to, the letters I have had to answer, the sea of business and of pleasure in which I have been plunged, not even the genius of an — or the pen of a — could describe.

Wherefore I indite a monstrously short and wildly uninteresting epistle to the American Dando ; but perhaps you don't know who Dando was. He was an oyster-eater, my dear Felton. He used to go into oyster-shops, without a farthing of money, and stand at the counter eating natives, until the man who opened them grew pale, cast down his knife, staggered backward, struck his white forehead with his open hand, and cried, " You are Dando !!! " He has been known to eat twenty dozen at one sitting, and would have eaten forty, if the truth had

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not flashed upon the shopkeeper. For these offences he was constantly committed to the House of Correction. During his last imprisonment he was taken ill, got worse and worse, and at last began knocking violent double knocks at Death's door. The doctor stood beside his bed, with his fingers on his pulse. "He is going," says the doctor. "I see it in his eye. There is only one thing that would keep life in him for another hour, and that is—oysters." They were immediately brought. Dando swallowed eight, and feebly took a ninth. He held it in his mouth and looked round the bed strangely. "Not a bad one, is it?" says the doctor. The patient shook his head, rubbed his trembling hand upon his stomach, bolted the oyster, and fell back—dead. They buried him in the prison yard, and paved his grave with oyster shells.

We are all well and hearty, and have already begun to wonder what time next year you and Mrs. Felton and Dr. Howe will come across the briny sea together. Tomorrow we go to the seaside for two months. I am looking out for news of Longfellow, and shall be delighted when I know that he is on his way to London and this house.

I am bent upon striking at the piratical newspapers with the sharpest edge I can put upon my small axe, and hope in the next session of Parliament to stop their entrance into Canada. For the first time within the memory of man, the professors of English literature seem disposed to act together on this question. It is a good thing to aggravate a scoundrel, if one can do nothing else, and I think we *can* make them smart a little in this way. . . .

I wish you had been at Greenwich the other day, where a party of friends gave me a private dinner ; public ones

Characters

I have refused. C—— was perfectly wild at the reunion and, after singing all manner of marine songs, wound up the entertainment by coming home (six miles) in a little open phaeton of mine, *on his head*, to the mingled delight and indignation of the metropolitan police. We were very jovial indeed; and I assure you that I drank your health with fearful vigour and energy.

On board that ship coming home I established a club, called the United Vagabonds, to the large amusement of the rest of the passengers. This holy brotherhood committed all kinds of absurdities, and dined always, with a variety of solemn forms, at one end of the table, below the mast, away from all the rest. The captain being ill when we were three or four days out, I produced my medicine chest and recovered him. We had a few more sick men after that, and I went round "the wards" every day in great state, accompanied by two Vagabonds, habited as Ben Allen and Bob Sawyer, bearing enormous rolls of plaster and huge pairs of scissors. We were really very merry all the way, breakfasted in one party at Liverpool, shook hands, and parted most cordially. . . .—Affectionately your faithful Friend.

P.S.—I have looked over my journal, and have decided to produce my American trip in two volumes. I have written about half the first since I came home, and hope to be out in October. This is "exclusive news," to be communicated to any friends to whom you may like to intrust it, my dear F.

XV

THE OLD LION

W. S. Landor : extracts from his correspondence 

(To Southey)

1810

IN architects I have passed from a great scoundrel to a greater, a thing I thought impossible ; and have been a whole year in making a farmhouse habitable. It is not half finished, and has cost already two thousand pounds. I think seriously of filling it with chips and straw, and setting fire to it. Never was anything half so ugly, though there is not a brick or tile throughout. Again and again I lament I was disappointed in my attempt to fix in your delightful country. The earth contains no race of human beings so totally vile and worthless as the Welsh. . . . I have expended in labour, within three years, eight thousand pounds amongst them, and yet they treat me as their greatest enemy. . . . When I had the happiness of meeting you in Bristol, you mentioned your design of coming into Monmouthshire this summer. I hope nothing will hinder it. Before two months have passed, I can give you a comfortable bed. I have two small rooms finished, and my kitchen will be completed in six weeks.

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1811

JEFFREY is called a clever man, I hear. If so, people may be clever men without knowing the nature of a lie, or the distinction between virtue and vice. No species of dishonesty is surely so unpardonable as Jeffrey's, no profligacy so flagitious. Thievery may arise from early example or from urgent want. It may have grown into an incurable habit, or have been pushed on by the necessities of nature. A man may commit even murder itself from the sudden and uncontrollable impulse of a heart still uncorrupted ; but he must possess one of a very different kind who can air and exercise his faculties on no other ground than the destruction of fame and the mortification of genius. I was once asked whether I would be introduced to this gentleman. My reply was, No, nor to any other rascal whatsoever. I like to speak plainly, and particularly so when the person of whom I speak may profit by it.

1814

EVERY hope of meeting you again in England has vanished. Pardon me if this is only the second of my wishes. My first is, that I may become by degrees indifferent to this country. The Court of Exchequer has decided in my favour ; but B has been able to promise bail and a replevy, so that the ends of justice are defeated. Nearly three years' rent will be due before I can receive one farthing from him ; and all my timber is spoiled. I shall be utterly ruined. Not being able to pay the interest of 10,000*l.* debt on the Llanthony estate, the mortgagee will instantly seize on it until he has paid himself the whole of the principal. The laws of England are made entirely for the protection of guilt. A creditor could imprison me for twenty pounds, while a man who

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owes me two thousand, and keeps me from the possession of two thousand more, can convert wealth and affluence into poverty and distress,—can, in short, drive me for ever from my native country, and riot with impunity on the ruins of my estate. I had promised my mother to visit her. I never can hope to see her again. She is seventy-two, and her sorrow at my overwhelming and most unmerited misfortunes will too surely shorten her days. My wife, when she married, little thought she should leave all her friends to live in obscurity and perhaps in want. For my sake she refused one of the largest fortunes that any private gentleman possesses, and another person of distinguished rank. Whoever comes near me is either unhappy or ungrateful. There is no act of forbearance or of kindness which B did not receive from me. His father saw and knew perfectly that his farming must ruin him. Yet, instead of persuading him to resign it, he sent the remainder of his family to live with him, and to countenance him in all his violence and roguery. I go to-morrow to St. Malo. In what part of France I shall end my days, I know not, but there I shall end them; and God grant that I may end them speedily, and so as to leave as little sorrow as possible to my friends. No time will alter my regard and veneration for you; nor shall anything lessen the kind sentiments you entertain for me. It is a great privilege to hold the hearts of the virtuous. If men in general knew how great it is, could they ever consent to abandon it? I am alone here. My wife follows me when I have found a place fit for her reception. Adieu!

1825

HIS first villany in making me disappoint the person with whom I had agreed for the pictures instigated me to throw my fourth volume, in its imperfect state, into

The Old Lion

the fire, and has cost me nine-tenths of my fame as a writer. His next villany will entail perhaps a chancery-suit on my children,—for at its commencement I blow my brains out. . . . Mr. Hazlitt, Mr. Leigh Hunt, Lord Dillon, Mr. Brown, and some other authors of various kinds, have been made acquainted, one from another, with this whole affair; and they speak of it as a thing unprecedented. . . . It is well I did it [an Imaginary Conversation] before Taylor had given me a fresh proof of his intolerable roguery. This cures me forever, if I live, of writing what could be published; and I will take good care that my son shall not suffer in the same way. Not a line of any kind will I leave behind me. My children shall be carefully warned against literature. To fence, to swim, to speak French, are the most they shall learn.

(To his Sisters)

1830

BUT my country now is Italy, where I have a residence for life, and literally may sit under my own vine and my own fig-tree. I have some thousands of the one and some scores of the other, with myrtles, pomegranates, oranges, lemons, gagias, and mimosas in great quantity. I intend to make a garden not very unlike yours at Warwick; but, alas, time is wanting. I *may* live another ten years, but do not expect it. In a few days, whenever the weather will allow it, I have four mimosas ready to place round my intended tomb, and a friend who is coming to plant them.

1831

I MUST now give you a description of the place. The front of the house is towards the north, looking at the ancient town of Fiesole, three quarters of a mile

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off. The hills of Fiesole protect it from the north and northeast winds. The hall is 31 ft. by 22, and 20 high. On the right is a drawing-room 22 by 20; and through it you come to another 26 by 20. All are 20 ft. high. Opposite the door is another leading down to the offices on right and left; and between them to a terrace-walk about a hundred yards long, overlooking Valdarno and Vallombrosa, celebrated by Milton. On the right of the downward staircase is the upward staircase to the bedrooms; and on the left are two other rooms corresponding with the two drawing-rooms. Over the hall, which is vaulted, is another room of equal size, delightfully cool in summer. I have four good bedrooms upstairs, 13 ft. high. One smaller and two servants' bedrooms over these, 10½ ft. high. In the centre of the house is a high turret, a dovecote. The house is 60 ft. high on the terrace side, and 50 on the other; the turret is 18 ft. above the 60. I have two gardens: one with a fountain and fine jet-d'eau. In the two are 165 large lemon-trees and 20 orange-trees, with two conservatories to keep them in, in winter. The whole could not be built in these days for 10,000*l*.

I am putting everything into good order by degrees; in fact, I spend in improvements what I used to spend in house-rent: that is about 75*l*. a year. I have planted 200 cypresses, 600 vines, 400 roses, 200 arbutuses, and 70 bays, besides laurustinas, etc. etc., and 60 fruit-trees of the best qualities from France. I have not had a moment's illness since I resided here, nor have the children. My wife runs after colds; it would be strange if she did not take them; but she has taken none here; hers are all from Florence. I have the best water, the best air, and the best oil in the world. They speak highly of the wine too; but here I doubt. In fact, I hate wine, unless hock or claret.

The Old Lion

1831

L LANTHONY, I am afraid, will never be occupied by any one. I proposed to take down the house, and sell the materials ; for certainly neither I nor Arnold will ever live there. I never think of it without thinking of the ruin to which it has brought me ; leaving me one of the poorest Englishmen in Florence, instead of one of the richest.

(To Lady Blessington)

FLORENCE, *March 14*, 1833

A GERMAN tutor is coming to manage A[rnold], within a few days ; I can hardly bring him to construe a little Greek with me, and what is worse, he is not always disposed to fence with me. I foresee he will be a worse dancer than I am, if possible ; in vain I tell him what is very true, that I have suffered more from my bad dancing, than from all the other misfortunes and miseries of my life put together. Not dancing well ! I never danced at all ; and how grievously has my heart ached when others were in the full enjoyment of that recreation, which I had no right even to partake of.

Hare has lately bought a Raffael here for four hundred louis. It is a Raffael, indeed, but a copy from Pietro Perugino.

The original is extant, and much finer than the copy. Raffael was but a boy when he painted it ; he and his master are the only two painters that ever had a perfect idea of feminine beauty.

"Raffael, when he went to Rome, lost Paradise, and had only Eden ;" his Fornarina, and others, are fine women, but not such women as the first, that God made, or as the one that he chose to be the idol of

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half the world. Titian, less fortunate than Lawrence, was rarely employed to paint a beauty ; those that he and Correggio chose for models had no grace or loveliness ; Leonardo's are akin to ugliness.

FLORENCE, *July 16, 1833*

I FIND that Coleridge has lost the beneficent friend, at whose house he lived. George IV., the vilest wretch in Europe, gave him £100 a year, enough, in London, to buy three turnips and half an egg a day. Those men surely were the most dexterous of courtiers, who resolved to shew William that his brother was not the vilest, by dashing the half egg and three turnips from the plate of Coleridge. No such action as this is recorded of any administration in the British annals, and I am convinced that there is not a state in Europe, or Asia, in which the paltriest minister of the puniest despot would recommend it.

FLORENCE, *February 15, 1834*

THE book indeed is the "Book of Beauty," both inside and outside. Nevertheless, I must observe that neither here nor in any other engraving, do I find a resemblance of you. I do not find the expression. Lawrence has not succeeded either, unless you have the gift of changing it almost totally. The last change in that case was for the better—but pray stay here.

I have a little spite against the frontispiece, and am resolved to prefer Francesca. If I had seen such a person any time towards the close of the last century, I am afraid I should have been, what some rogue called me upon a very different occasion, much later, *matto! ma matto!* Age breaks down the prison in which beauty has enthralled us ; but I suspect there are some of us,

The Old Lion

like the old fellow let loose from the Bastille, who would gladly get in again were it possible.

You are too generous in praising me for my admiration of Wordsworth and Southey. This is only a proof that I was not born to be a poet. I am not a good hater ; I only hate pain and trouble. I think I could have hated Bonaparte if he had been a gentleman. Castlereagh was almost as mischievous, and was popularly a gentleman ; but being an ignorant and weak creature, he escapes from hatred without a bruise.

The Whigs, I am afraid, are as little choice of men as the Tories are of means. It is among the few felicities of my life that I never was attached to a party or a party man. I have always excused myself from dinners, that I may never meet one.

January 13, 1835

I HAVE been reading Beckford's Travels, and Vathek. The last pleases me less than it did forty years ago, and yet the Arabian Nights have lost none of their charms for me. All the learned and wiseacres in England cried out against this wonderful work, upon its first appearance ; Gray among the rest. Yet I doubt whether any man, except Shakespeare, has afforded so much delight, if we open our hearts to receive it. The author of the Arabian Nights was the greatest benefactor the East ever had, not excepting Mahomet. How many hours of pure happiness has he bestowed on six-and-twenty millions of hearers. All the springs of the desert have less refreshed the Arabs than those delightful tales, and they cast their gems and genii over our benighted and foggy regions.

B[eckford], in his second letter, says, that two or three of Rosa da Tivoli's landscapes merit observation, and in

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the next he scorns P. Potter. Now all Rosa da Tivoli's works are not worth a blade of grass from the hand of P. Potter. The one was a consummate artist ; the other one of the coarsest that ever bedaubed a canvas. He talks of "the worst roads that ever *pretended* to be made use of," and of a *dish* of tea, without giving us the ladle or the carving knife for it. When I read such things, I rub my eyes, and awaken my recollections. I not only fancy that I am older than I am in reality (which is old enough, in all conscience), but that I have begun to lose my acquaintance with our idiom. Those who desire to write upon light matters gracefully, must read with attention the writings of Pope, Lady M. W. Montague, and Lord Chesterfield—three ladies of the first water.

I am sorry you sent my "Examination" by a private hand. I never in my life sent a note by a private hand. Nothing affects me but pain and disappointment. Hannah More says, "There are no evils in the world but sin and bile." They fall upon me very unequally. I would give a good quantity of bile for a trifle of sin, and yet my philosophy would induce me to throw it aside. No man ever began so early to abolish hope and wishes. Happy he, who is resolved to walk with Epicurus on his right and Epictetus on his left, and to shut his ears to every other voice along the road.

March 16, 1835

AFTER a year or more, I receive your reminiscences of Byron. Never, for the love of God, send anything again by a Welshman. I mean anything literary.

1836

WORDSWORTH, no doubt, has a thousand good reasons why there is not a poet upon earth ; but as there are many who have given me pleasure, I love

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them for it ; some of them perhaps a little more than they deserve. All men are liable to error. I particularly, who believe that there may be criticism without sarcasm, and Christianity without deans and chapters.

The surface of Wordsworth's mind, the poetry, has a good deal of staple about it, and will bear handling ; but the inner, the conversational and private, has many coarse intractable dangling threads, fit only for the flock-bed equipage of grooms. I praised him before I knew more of him ; else I never should : and I might have been unjust to the better part had I remarked the worse sooner. This is a great fault, to which we are all liable, from an erroneous idea of consistency.

Beside, there is a little malice, I fear, at the bottom of our hearts (men's, I mean, of course).

Undated

WHEN I have once composed a thing, I never care what becomes of it. This, and being grey, are the only things in which I differ from what I was. What treasures I thought my trumpery some thirty or forty years ago.

Do not let Count D'Orsay shoot any more little birds. I never see one fall but its ghost haunts me, and "thou canst not say I did it" is quite vain.

May 21, 1837

I HEAR they have been reviewing me in the Quarterly. I wonder where they found their telescope. By the account I receive of it, it wants nothing but glasses. How perilous it is to tread upon the heels of truth !

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BATH, *January 19, 1838*

THE best, however, that ever was written, either in Latin or any other language, is attributed to Shenstone. Vale (I forget who) *Heu quanto minus est cum reliquis versari, quam tui meminisse!*

When will any man write anything worth this again? It never comes into my mind but it takes entire possession of my heart, and I am as incapable of reading for an hour after, as if I had just left Hamlet or Othello. There are single sentences in the world, far out-valuing three or four hundred authors, all entire; as there have been individual men out-valuing whole nations; Washington, for instance, and Kosciusko, and Hofer, were fairly worth all the other men of their times; I mean that each was.

Your friend, Lord Durham, must either be a very patriotic man, or a very ambitious one. I confess to you, my ambition and patriotism united would not induce me to undertake what he has undertaken, for the possession of all America, North and South. I am so timid and thoughtless a creature, that I would not have a chilblain for a kingdom. I would not even dip this pen in ink, if it cost me any exertion, to set obstinate fools rather more right than they were before. What are they? chaff, soon blown away, to make room for other chaff, threshed on the same floor. Superstition and fraud must be drawn out of the ring, then men will have fair play, and fight for any stake that suits them.

Undated

MR. BROWN accompanied poor Keats on a visit to W[ordsworth]. Keats read to him a part of his "Endymion," in which I think he told me, there is a

The Old Lion

"Hymn to Pan." W—— looked red, though grave ; and said, at last, "A pretty piece of paganism."

This reminds me of Kenyon's question to [Crabb] Robinson, — "Did you ever, you who have travelled with him for months together, did you ever hear him speak favourably of any author whatsoever?"

Robinson's reply was, "He certainly is not given to the laudatory."

He well deserves the flagellation I have given him, for his impudence in regard to Southey. But to make amends, if ever he writes five such things as you will find at the end of my volume, I will give him as many hundred pounds. I will now publish nothing more, for the remainder of my life.

December 1838

PIETY is greatly on the increase at Bath, not only conceited Evangelism, but most genuine piety, and among men who certainly make no false pretensions. The last time I was at the rooms, I heard two go through the same formula on the same occasion. They both had been waiting in the lobby, and they both had been blest by having handed their ladies into their carriages. One shuffled his shoulders, and the other dilated both nostrils, and each exclaimed with equal devotion, "Thank God!"

January 1, 1839

I HAVE this instant sent your note to poor —. I never was paid so well for celebrity. It has made him very ill. He is now about to publish a drama on the Deluge, on which he tells me he has been engaged for twenty years. You cannot be surprised that he is grievously and hopelessly afflicted, having had water on

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his brain so long. The threatened deluge makes me open my prayer-book to look for the blessed words of the Royal Psalmist, and join his Majesty in "O that I were a bird!" a water bird of course, wild goose, sheldrake, gull, etc., in short, anything that might possibly escape from the interior of the ark, for which (I fear) not a drop of spirit has been provided.

January 15, 1839

I HAVE been in Berkshire for four days, on a visit to Hare, who insisted on my keeping his birthday. He is residing at West Woodhay House, built by Inigo Jones. It would do passably well for Naples, better for Timbuctoo. All but my victuals were congealed. I almost envied the bed of Procrustes, so enormous was mine, such a frozen sea. A company of comedians might have acted in it any piece they chose, and there would have been ample room for prompter and orchestra. I was ready to say my prayers when I was delivered from it.

March 7, 1839

THIS morning I have taken back to the circulating library the last volume of Vidocq. If I had time, or rather, if I took any great interest in two such people as the great thief and the great thief-taker, I would compose a parallel, inch by inch, of these two men.¹ One of them frightened all the good, the other all the bad—one betrayed all his employers, the other all his accomplices—one sacrificed the hopeful to ambition, the other the desperate to justice.

I doubt whether in seven years I could form the corollary more completely than I have done in the seventh of a minute, but it will require a century to make

¹ Napoleon. Vidocq.

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men honest and wise enough to bear the question "which is best?" The whole race of moral swindlers and ring-droppers must be taken up first. When God has stripped us all of furs and flounces, our just proportions will be discovered better.

BATH, *November 17, 1839*

I COULD be well content in solitude as deep as his. Never were my spirits better than in my thirtieth year, when I wrote "Gebir," and did not exchange twelve sentences with men. I lived among woods, which are now killed with copper works, and took my walk over sandy sea-coast deserts, then covered with low roses and thousands of nameless flowers and plants, trodden by the naked feet of the Welsh peasantry, and trackless.

1839 (?)

DIGBY, who became a Catholic, and Padre Pagani, who probably is the next in learning to Digby among the Catholics, are inclined to convert me. Doubtless it is an amusement to them to throw the rod and line over the running stream: the trout laughs in his sleeves, and sidles, and shows all his specks. Alas! I can no longer sing my old version of *Adeste Fideles*, for want of a chorus—"Adeste Fideles! læte triumphantes!" etc.

A few months ago I went to occupy my former seat in the Catholic Chapel, where I had once been seated between Mrs. Fitzherbert and Helen Walsh Porter. On the wall, at the extremity of it, I saw a marble tablet. I went toward it, and there I found the name of my oldest friend, Mrs. Ferrers, and just beyond it was her daughter's. I will venture to say, and I do it without pride, I was at that moment the most religious and

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devout man in the whole chapel. It is true I did not hear the service, and the music, which was so mingled with the affections as to be lost among them: yet, instead of wishing to be reminded of soft words and tender looks, which I went for, the faces of old friends rose up from the grave before me, and were far more welcome. I waited until all were gone out, and then I placed my brow against the edge of the monument. Age has its follies, you see, no less than youth.

BATH, *December 1, 1839*

ON Wednesday last, I was present at a wedding; the only one I ever was at, excepting one other. There was bride-cake, and there were verses in profusion, two heavy commodities! But what an emblematic thing the bride-cake is! All sugar above, and all lumpiness below. But may Heaven grant another, and far different destiny, to my sweet-tempered, innocent, sensible young friend.

BATH, *April 1, 1841*

IT is beginning to rain again. What are our bishops at? But their venison never was fatter.

No date

YOU cannot doubt how proud and happy I shall be to be your guest. If you should not have left London in the beginning of May, do not be shocked at hearing that a cab is come to the door with a fierce looking old man in it.

BATH, *July 4, 1841*

I AM delighted to find how gloriously my friend Dickens has been received at Edinburgh. But the Scotchmen could not avoid ill-placed criticisms, and oblique comparisons. One blockhead talked of his

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deficiency in the female character—the very thing in which he and Shakespeare most excel.

Juliet herself may, for one moment, turn her eyes from Romeo on little Nell, and Desdemona take to heart her hairbreadth escapes. I dare not decide which of these three characters is the most interesting and pathetic.

BATH, *December 21*

PERMIT me to be quite vernacular, and to say, instead of *the compliments of the season*, “a merry Christmas!” How well that sounds—there are the village bells in it.

BATH, *October 18, 1843*

I DETEST the character of Rousseau, but I cannot resist his eloquence. He had more of it, and finer than any man. Demosthenes’ was a contracted heart; and even Milton’s was vitiated by the sourness of theology.

BATH, *November 5, 1844*

THE rheumatism you know (or rather I hope you do *not* know) always comes with a heavy cudgel. It was caused by my imprudence in rising up in my bed to fix a thought on paper—night is not the time to pin a butterfly on a blank leaf. Four hot baths have now almost buoyed up this monster from oppressing me. Of its four legs, I feel only one upon me, and indeed just the extremity of the hoof. At Gore House I should forget it—there I forgot the plague when I had it. But Bath air is the best in the world. In twenty minutes we can have three climates.

January 1, 1845

MOST things are real with me, except realities.

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August 28, 1846

I FEEL I am growing old, for want of somebody to tell me (charming falsehood) that I am looking as young as ever. There is a vast deal of vital air in loving words.

January 9, 1849

I FEEL a great interest, a great anxiety, for the welfare of Louis Napoleon. I told him, if ever he were again in prison, I would visit him there ; but never, if he were upon a throne, would I come near him. He is the only man living who would adorn one, but thrones are my aversion and abhorrence. France, I fear, can exist in no other condition. Her public men are greatly more able than ours, but they have less integrity. Every Frenchman is by nature an intriguer. It was not always so, to the same extent ; but nature is modified, and even changed, by circumstances. Even garden statues take their form from clay.

(To John Forster)

December 21, 1840

I N this weather nobody can be quite well. I myself, an oddly-mixt metal with a pretty large portion of iron in it, am sensible to the curse of climate. The chief reason is, I cannot walk through the snow and slop. My body, and my mind more especially, requires strong exercise. Nothing can tire either, excepting dull people, and they weary both at once. The snow fell in Italy at the end of November, and the weather was severe at Florence. Lately, from the want of sun and all things cheerful, my saddened and wearied mind has often roosted on the acacias and cypresses I planted.

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Thoughts when they're weakest take the longest flights, and tempt the wintry seas in darkest nights. How is it that when I am a little melancholy my words are apt to fall into verse? Joy has never such an effect on me. In fact, we hardly speak when we meet, and are at best but bowing acquaintance.

1844

A HERD of clownish Warwickshire squires of the purest breed, and in no county of England is the breed so pure, was resolved to celebrate Shakespeare's birthday at Stratford-upon-Avon. I was invited: I declined. I told them he was not only the greatest glory of their county but the greatest work of God's creation, but I should hardly testify my love and veneration by eating and drinking, and I had refused all such invitations when I might meet those who knew me, of whom in Warwickshire there is now scarcely one. I could not help doubting whether any of the party ever read a single page of his writings; but I entertain no doubt whatever that if he were living and had come into the party, they would have butted him out. As the rocks that bound the sea are formed by the smallest and most inert insects, so celebrity seems to rise up from accretions equally vile and worthless. This idea has occurred to me many times before, and may perhaps be found in my writings; but never did it come forward with so luminous a stare as on the present occasion.

1856

I HAVE been cushioning my old head on the pillow of novels. What a delightful book is Bulwer's *Caxtons*! I have done him injustice, for I never thought he could have written such pure Saxon English as may

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be found here ; and Sterne himself, whom he has chosen to imitate as to manner, is hardly better in the way of character. *Esmond*, too, is a novel that has surprised me. Never could I have believed that Thackeray, great as his abilities are, could have written so noble a story as *Esmond*. On your recommendation I have since been reading the whole of *Humphrey Clinker*. It seems to me that I must have read a part of it before. Every letter ends with *rigmarole*, then much in fashion, and thought to be very graceful. By *rigmarole* I mean such a termination as this : "It had like to have kindled the flames of discord in the family of yours always, etc." A tail always curls round the back of the letter-writer, and sticks to his *sincerely*, etc. How would Cicero and Pliny and Trajan have laught at this circumbendibus ! In the main, however, you are right about the book. It has abundant humour ; and how admirable are such strokes as where the jailer's wife "wishes there was such another good soul in every jail in England !" . . . I must now run to Dickens for refreshment. He is a never-failing resource ; and what an astonishing genius he is !

1856

I HAVE been out of doors not more than twice in fifty-nine days, a few minutes in each. I think I will go and die in Italy, but not in my old home. It is pleasant to see the sun about one's death-bed. . . .

Three months hence I shall once more purchase a landed property, situated in the parish of Widcombe, and comprising by actual admeasurement eight feet by four, next adjoining the church-tower in said parish. No magpie drapery, no lead, no rascals in hatbands, no horses in full feathers for me. Six old chairmen are sufficient I thought once of complying with your kind

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wish that I should lie at Tachbrook, but I am not worth the carriage so far. And now again about dying. Out of my hundred pounds, when I get it, I will reserve ten for my funeral, with strict orders that the sum may not be exceeded; and the gravestone and grave will amount to nearly or quite ten more. As I can live without superfluities, surely I can die without them."

1856

I TAKE it uncivil in Death to invite and then to balk me. It was troublesome to walk back, when I found he would not take me in. I do hope and trust he will never play me the same trick again. We ought both of us to be graver.

Charles Dickens to his old friend



(To Walter Savage Landor)

PARIS, *November 22, 1846*

YOUNG MAN,—I will not go there if I can help it. I have not the least confidence in the value of your introduction to the Devil. I can't help thinking that it would be of better use "the other way, the other way," but I won't try it there, either, at present, if I can help it. Your godson says, is that your duty? and he begs me to enclose a blush newly blushed for you.

As to writing, I have written to you twenty times and twenty more to that, if you only knew it. I have been writing a little Christmas book, besides, expressly for you. And if you don't like it, I shall go to the font of Marylebone Church as soon as I conveniently can and renounce you: I am not to be trifled with. I write from Paris. I am getting up some French steam. I intend

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to proceed upon the longing-for-a-lap-of-blood-at-last principle, and if you *do* offend me, look to it.

We are all well and happy, and they send loves to you by the bushel. We are in the agonies of house-hunting. The people are frightfully civil, and grotesquely extortionate. One man (with a house to let) told me yesterday that he loved the Duke of Wellington like a brother. The same gentleman wanted to hug me round the neck with one hand, and pick my pocket with the other.

Don't be hard upon the Swiss. They are a thorn in the sides of European despots, and a good wholesome people to live near Jesuit-ridden kings on the brighter side of the mountains. My hat shall ever be ready to be thrown up, and my glove ever be ready to be thrown down, for Switzerland. If you were the man I took you for, when I took you (as a godfather) for better and for worse, you would come to Paris and amaze the weak walls of the house I haven't found yet with that steady snore of yours, which I once heard piercing the door of your bedroom in Devonshire Terrace, reverberating along the bell-wire in the hall, so getting outside into the street, playing *Æolian* harps among the area railings, and going down the New Road like the blast of a trumpet.

I forgive you your reviling of me : there's a shovelful of live coals for your head—does it burn? And am, with true affection—does it burn now?—Ever yours,

CHARLES DICKENS

XVI

MELLOW NEW ENGLANDERS

J. R. Lowell wishes Miss Norton a Happy New Year

ELMWOOD, *December 31, 1862*







. . . I WISH you all a Happy New Year! The first of January always comes to me, I confess, with a kind of sadness.

"Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back
Wherein he puts—alms for Oblivion."

This one comes in a storm.

But let us have a cheerful confidence that we are worth
damning, for that implies a chance also of something
better. . . . Affectionately always,

J. R. L.

Lowell invites Fields into the country, in the grand
manner      

March 1868

FRAGMENTS of a Pindarique Ode in the manner of
the late divine Mr. Abraham Cowley:

Come, oh, my Fields,
Leaving the city (with ill authors vex)

At half-past two on Thursday next


Come, try what sweets the Country yields;

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Come and eat Pigge!
For, such the swelling nature
Of that delicious creature,
That ere another week he'll be too bigge.
Come, and bring Her with you
By whose fair presence graced
An Irish stew,
Nay, a meer empty board, were an imperial feast.

Here I am interrupted—but you shall have the rest by instalments. But come on Tuesday at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2, with Mrs. Fields.—Believe me ever yours,

J. R. LOWELL

Lowell sends Eliot Norton the news from London 

40 CLARGES STREET, PICCADILLY, W.

July 25, 1886

... **W**HAT you say of Carlyle is sympathetic (as it should be) and not dyspathetic. Of course, every man that has any dimensions at all must have more than one side to him, and if he have dyspepsia one of those sides will have corners, and sharp ones, that find a sort of ease in the ribs of other folks. But, after all, Carlyle was a man of genius, and it is sheer waste of time to be looking one's gift-horse in the mouth and examining his hoofs, if he have wings and can lift us away from this lower region of turmoil at will. The rest is rubbish. Biographies (except Plutarch's) seldom do a man any good, and the less in proportion to the cleverness of the biographer, for your very clever one is sure to mix a good deal of auto- with his bio-graphy. The beauty and truth of impressions depend on the substance in which they are made. The main ingredient a bio-

Mellow New Englanders

grapher should contribute is sympathy (which includes insight). Truth is not enough, for in biography, as in law, the greater the truth sometimes the greater the libel. Happy those authors who are nothing more than airy tongues that syllable our names when they have a message for us! Most Lives are more properly Deaths, or at least might have for their title, like Chapman's D'Ambois, "The Life *and* Death of So-and-So."

I am living a futile life here, but am as fond of London as Charles Lamb. The rattle of a hansom shakes new life into my old bones, and I ruin myself in them. I love such evanescent and unimportant glimpses of the world as I catch from my flying perch. I envy the birds no longer, and learn better to converse with them. Our views of life are the same.

As for politics—I saw Gladstone the other day, and he was as buoyant (*boyant*) as when I stayed with him at Holmbury, just before he started for Scotland. I think the Fates are with him, and that the Tories will have to take up Home Rule where he left it.

The great difficulty is in making up an able Cabinet. I suppose that ineptitudes will be neutralized with coronets (or signalised by them, as we mark shoals with buoys), and room made for younger and abler men. Lord Randolph Churchill is taken seriously now, and will have a front seat. He ought to build a temple to the goddess Push.

I spent two days in the country lately (at the George Lewises) with Burne-Jones, and found him delightful. As Mrs. Lewis says, "If he were not a great artist, there would be enough left of him to make a great man of." His series of Perseus (did you see any of them?) is to my thinking the greatest achievement in art of our time or of any time. It has mannerisms which I don't like;

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but it is noble in conception and execution. Above all, it has the crowning gift of making an old story as new as if nobody had ever told it before. I feel as if I had heard the waves rustle under the bows of the Argo.

I suppose you are at Ashfield, and that the hills are as dear as ever, and Monadnock as like a purpose unfulfilled. Is the June grass golden on the upper slopes? Do the cloud-shadows still linger and hate to leave their soft beds in the woods and grass? Above all, are you and yours well and remember me? And G. W. C.? Sometimes I hear faintly the notes of S——'s violin singing "Scheiden, ach, Scheiden!" and think of many things. . . .

Lowell tells Mrs. Leslie Stephen what it is like
to be seventy     

68 BEACON STREET, BOSTON

February 27, 1889







. . . I HAVE been forging over the reef of my seventieth birthday into the smooth water beyond without much damage to my keel, so far as I can discover. Even had I been wrecked, I should have saved your box, as Camoëns did his Lusiads. 'Tis a beauty, and I shall fill my pipe from it with a sense of virtue as if I were doing something handsome. How adroitly indulgent you women are. If you can't cleanse us of our vices, you contrive to make them so far as possible becoming.

I was dined on my birthday, and praised to a degree that would have satisfied you, most partial even of your sex. But somehow I liked it, and indeed none but a prig could have helped liking the affectionate way it was

Mellow New Englanders

done. I suppose it is a sign of weakness in me somewhere, but I can't help it. I *do* like to be liked. It gives me a far better excuse for being about (and in everybody's way) than having written a fine poem does. *That'll* be all very well when one is under the mould. But I am not sure whether one will care for it much. So keep on liking me, won't you?

It is very droll to be seventy. Don't scold me for it—I'll never do it again; but I don't feel any older, I think, and I am sure I don't feel any wiser than I did before. 'Tis a little depressing to be reminded that one has lived so long and done so little. When I measure the length with the achievement there is a horrible overlapping, but I shall expect a certain deference. Whatever condescension I show will be multiplied by seven instead of six, remember, and precious in proportion. . . .

Lowell offers Mrs. Leslie Stephen some old-age thoughts      

ELMWOOD, *November 9, 1889*

... IT is a very strange feeling this of renewing my life here. I feel somehow as if Charon had ferried me the wrong way, and yet it is into a world of ghosts that he has brought me, and I am slowly making myself at home among them. It is raining faintly to-day, with a soft southerly wind which will prevail with the few leaves left on my trees to let go their hold and join their fellows on the ground. I have forbidden them to be raked away, for the rustle of them stirs my earliest memories, and when the wind blows they pirouette so gaily as to give me cheerful thoughts of death. But oh, the change! I hardly know the old road (a street now)

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that I have paced so many years, for the new houses. My old homestead seems to have a puzzled look in its eyes as it looks down (a trifle superciliously, methinks) on these upstarts. "He who lives longest has the most old clothes," says the Zulu proverb, and I shall wear mine till I die.

It is odd to think that the little feet which make the old staircases and passages querulous at their broken slumbers are the second generation since my own. I try to believe it, but find it hard. I feel so anomalously young I can't persuade myself that *I* ever made such a rumpus, though perhaps the boots are thicker now.

The two old English elms in front of the house haven't changed. The sturdy islanders! A trifle thicker in the waist, perhaps, as is the wont of prosperous elders, but looking just as I first saw them seventy years ago, and it is a balm to my eyes. I am by no means sure that it is wise to love the accustomed and familiar so much as I do, but it is pleasant and gives a unity to life which trying can't accomplish.

I began this yesterday and now it is Sunday. You will have *not* gone to church five hours ago. I have just performed the chief function of a householder by winding up all the clocks and adjusting them to a *striking* unanimity. I doubt if this be judicious, for when I am lying awake at night their little differences of opinion amuse me.

They persuade me how artificial a contrivance Time is. We have Eternity given us in the lump, can't believe in such luck, and cut it up into mouthfuls as if it wouldn't go round among so many. Are we to be seduced by the superstitious observances of the earth and sun into a belief in days and years?

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Oliver Wendell Holmes returns thanks for a
barometer ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

(To James T. Fields)

21 CHARLES STREET

July 6, 8.33 A.M.

Barometer at 30 $\frac{1}{10}$

MY DEAR FRIEND AND NEIGHBOUR,—
Your most unexpected gift, which is not a mere token of remembrance but a permanently valuable present, is making me happier every moment I look at it. It is so pleasant to be thought of by our friends when they have so much to draw their thoughts from us ; it is so pleasant, too, to find that they have cared enough about us to study our special tastes,—that you can see why your beautiful gift has a growing charm for me. Only Mrs. Holmes thinks it ought to be in the Parlor among the things for show, and I think it ought to be in the Study, where I can look at it at least once every hour every day of my life.

I have observed some extraordinary movements of the index of the barometer during the discussions which ensued, which you may be interested to see my notes of:—

Mrs. H. My dear, we shall of course keep this beautiful barometer in the parlor. *Fair.*

Dr. H. Why, no, my dear ; the study is the place. *Dry.*

Mrs. H. I'm sure it ought to go in the parlor. It's too handsome for your old den. *Change.*

Dr. H. I shall keep it in the study. *Very dry.*

Mrs. H. I don't think that's fair. *Rain.*

Dr. H. I'm sorry. Can't help it. *Very dry.*

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Mrs. H. It's—too—too—ba-a-ad. *Much rain.*

Dr. H. (Music omitted). 'Mid pleas-ures and paaal-a-a-c-es. *Set fair.*

Mrs. H. I *will* have it! You horrid—— *Stormy.*

You see what a wonderful instrument this is that you have given me. But my dear Mr. Fields, while it changes it will be a constant memorial of unchanging friendship: and while the dark hand of fate is traversing the whole range of mortal vicissitudes, the golden index of the kind affections shall stand always at SET FAIR.

Oliver Wendell Holmes felicitates with another
young man ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To John G. Whittier)

September 2, 1889

HERE I am at your side among the octogenarians.

You know all about it. You know why I have not thanked you before this for your beautiful and precious tribute, which would make any birthday memorable. I remember how you were overwhelmed with tributes on the occasion of your own eightieth birthday, and you can understand the impossibility I find before me of responding in any fitting shape to all the tokens of friendship which I receive. . . . I hope, dear Whittier, that you find much to enjoy in the midst of all the lesser trials which old age must bring with it. You have kind friends all around you, and the love and homage of your fellow-countrymen as few have enjoyed them, with the deep satisfaction of knowing that you have earned them, not merely by the gifts of your genius, but by a noble

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life, which has ripened without a flaw into a grand and serene old age. I never see my name coupled with yours, as it often is nowadays, without feeling honored by finding myself in such company, and wishing that I were more worthy of it. . . . I am living here with my daughter-in-law, and just as I turned this leaf I heard wheels at the door, and she got out, leading in in triumph her husband, His Honor, Judge Holmes of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, just arrived from Europe by the Scythia. I look up to him as my Magistrate and he knows me as his father, but my arms are around his neck and his moustache is sweeping my cheek—I feel young again at four-score.

XVII

LACONICS

The Sailor and the King ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

Jack Skifton to Charles II

KING CHARLES,—One of your subjects, the other night, robbed me of forty pounds, for which I robbed another of the same sum, who has inhumanly sent me to Newgate, and he swears I shall be hanged ; therefore, for your own sake, save my life, or you will lose one of the best seamen in your navy.

JACK SKIFTON

The Reply

JACK SKIFTON,—For this time I'll save thee from the gallows ; but if hereafter thou art guilty of the like, by — I'll have thee hanged, though the best seaman in my navy.—Thine,

CHARLES REX

Anne, Countess of Dorset, speaks her mind to Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State under Charles II ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

SIR,—I have been bullied by an usurper, I have been illtreated by a court, but I won't be dictated to by a subject. Your man shall not stand.

ANN DORSET, PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY

Laconics

Garrick and his factotum



W. Stone to David Garrick

I

Thursday noon

SIR,—Mr. Lacy turned me out of the lobby yesterday, and behaved very ill to me—I only ax'd for my two guineas for the last Bishop, and he swore I should not have a farthing. I cannot live upon air. I have a few Cupids you may have cheap, as they belong to a poor journeyman shoemaker, who I drink with now and then.—
I am your humble Servant,

W. STONE

II

Friday morning

STONE,—You are the best fellow in the world—bring the Cupids to the Theatre to-morrow ; if they are under six, and well made, you shall have a guinea a-piece for them. Mr. Lacy will pay you himself for the Bishop—he is very penitent for what he has done : if you can get me two murderers, I will pay you handsomely, particularly the spouting fellow who keeps the apple-stand on Tower-hill ; the cut in his face is just the thing. Pick me up an alderman or two for Richard, if you can ; and I have no objection to treat with you for a comely Mayor. The Barber will not do for Brutus, although I think he will succeed in Mat.

D. G.

III



SIR,—The Bishop of Winchester is getting drunk at the *Bear*—and swears he will not play to-night.—
I am yours,

W. STONE

The Second Post

IV

STONE,—The Bishop may go to the devil ; I do not know a greater rascal, except yourself. D. G.


Captain Walton wastes no words   

To Admiral Byng

SIR,—We have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships and vessels which were upon the coast, the number as per margin.—I am, etc., G. WALTON

Taken.—Admiral Mari, and four men of war, of 60, 54, 40, and 24 guns ; a ship laden with arms, and a bomb vessel. Burnt.—Four men of war, of 54, 40, and 30 guns ; a fire ship, and a bomb vessel

"Canterbury," off Syracuse, August 16, 1718

William Cowper acknowledges a gift of cloth 

To Lady Hesketh

I THANK you for the snip of cloth, commonly called a pattern. At present I have two coats and but one back. If at any time hereafter I should find myself possessed of fewer coats and more backs, it will be of use to me.

Laconics

The loans that failed ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

I

Mrs. Foote to her son the actor

DEAR SON,—I am in prison for debt ; come and assist your loving mother.

E. FOOTE

The Reply

DEAR MOTHER,—So am I ; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother.—Your affectionate son,

SAMUEL FOOTE

P.S.—I have sent my attorney to assist you ; in the meantime let us hope for better days.

II

Beau Brummell to Scrope Davies

MY DEAR SCROPE,—Lend me two hundred pounds. The banks are shut and all my money is in the three per cents. It shall be repaid to-morrow morning.—Yours,

GEORGE BRUMMEL

The Reply

MY DEAR GEORGE,—'Tis very unfortunate, but all my money is in the three per cents.—Yours,

S. DAVIES

The Second Post

III

One provincial actor to another

DEAR W.,—Lend me a couple of shillings until
Saturday, and oblige.—Yours, —

P.S.—On second thoughts, make it three.

The Reply

DEAR JACK,—I have only one shilling myself, or
would oblige.—Yours, —

P.S.—On second thoughts, I must change that for
dinner.

Charles Napier (“Black Charles”) asks for a ship ♪

To the First Lord of the Admiralty

1810

SIR,—My leave of absence is just out. I don't think
it worth remaining here, for I expect you will give
me a ship, as I am almost tired of campaigning, which
is a damned rum concern.

C. N.

The candidate and the voter ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

Mr. J. G. Lambton, contesting Durham, to Sir
Thomas Liddell

February 28, 1820

MY DEAR SIR,—In times like the present, it is
impossible to allow private feelings to take place
of a public sense of duty. I think your conduct as

Laconics

dangerous in Parliament as it is in your own county. Were you my own brother, therefore, I could not give you my support.

THOMAS LIDDELL

The Reply

MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,—In answer to your letter, I beg to say that I feel gratitude for your frankness, compassion for your fears, little dread of your opposition, and no want of your support.—I am, etc.,

J. G. LAMBTON

The Rev. Sydney Smith accepts an invitation conditionally ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

May 14, 1842

MY DEAR DICKENS,—I accept your obliging invitation conditionally. If I am invited by any man of greater genius than yourself, or one by whose works I have been more completely interested, I will repudiate you, and dine with the more splendid phenomenon of the two.—Ever yours sincerely,

SYDNEY SMITH

Walter Savage Landor to Lord Normanby, who had cut him ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

[circa 1858]

MY LORD,—Now I am recovering from an illness of several months' duration, aggravated no little by your lordship's rude reception of me at the Cascine, in

The Second Post

presence of my family and innumerable Florentines, I must remind you in the gentlest terms of the occurrence.

We are both of us old men, my lord, and are verging on decrepitude and imbecility. Else my note might be more energetic. I am not unobservant of distinctions. You by the favour of a minister are Marquis of Normanby. I by the grace of God am

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Louis Duchosal, the Genevese poet, writes to Paul Verlaine introducing a disciple ♪ ♪ ♪

A MI,—Je t'envoie Pierre Paul Plan, poète. Dis lui
des choses, DUCHOSAL

An old lady sends her nephew a present ♪ ♪

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—I am sending you some of your favourite cherries, preserved in brandy so that they may keep. I hope you and your friends will enjoy them.—Your affectionate aunt.

The Reply

MY DEAR AUNT,—A thousand thanks for your kind gift. I appreciate the cherries immensely, not so much for themselves, as for the spirit in which they are sent.—Your affectionate nephew.

Laconics

Master George Wells, after an operation, informs
Master Frank Wells of his duty ∪ ∪ ∪

DEAR FRANK,—I hope you will not think me
selfish, but I am in such great pain that I think
you ought to get me a small present.—Your loving

GEORGE

A commercial traveller, after a boisterous absence
from work, inquires as to his status ∪ ∪

DEAR FIRM, am I still with you?

XVIII

WHIMSICALITIES

A farmer's daughter is forced to decline o o

[1798]

DEAR MISS,—The energy of the races prompts me to assure you that my request is forbidden, the idea of which I had awkwardly nourished, notwithstanding my propensity to reserve. Mr. T. will be there. Let me with confidence assure you that him and brothers will be very happy to meet you and brothers. Us girls cannot go for reasons. The attention of the cows claims our assistance in the evening.—Unalterably yours, —

A Quaker schoolboy (aged 13) is dutiful to his
parents o o o o o o

GODMANCHESTER, 14 : 11 M°. 1743

HONOURED MOTHER,—Thy very kind Epistle of the 7th instant, with the Present of Pyes and Cakes, I duly and safely received and gratefully acknowledge, was much pleased to hear you were in a Measure of health, a good Degree whereof divine providence is

Whimsicalities

favouring my Self and the generality of our Family with at this present writing, and heartily desire may be continued to you and us with dear Father in his Travels and Return home to you again. With the cordial Tenders of Duty to thy Self and dear Father, of kind Love to Sisters with all other Relations and enquiring Friends to all whom Master and family desire to be kindly remembered Shall conclude and as in Duty bound subscribe my Self.—Thy dutiful Son,

WILLIAM IMPEY

Miss Pelham's maid, Mrs. Maxwell, has to refuse an invitation ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

MRS. MAXWELL presents her respects to Mrs. Stanley. She is at once both happy and uneasy at her kind remembrance. She is very sorry she cannot wait on Mrs. Stanley at that hour, as Miss Pelham dresses for both Courts that morning, returns home and dresses again for the Opera in the Evening, so that she shall be obliged to forego the mortification of that satisfaction. She wishes Mrs. Stanley every pleasure the Opera can afford, and setting apart such transient joys every substantial bliss you merit.

Lord Stormont and Sir James Scarlett crave the social influence of the ladies of Norwich ♪ ♪

[1832]

TO THE LADIES OF NORWICH,—“None but the brave deserve the fair.”—If ever the sweets of social virtue, the wrath of honest zeal, the earnings of

The Second Post

industry, and the prosperity of Trade, had any influence in the female breast, you have now a happy opportunity of exercising it to the advantage of *your* country—*your* cause.

If ever the feelings of a parent, wife, sister, friend, or lover, had a sympathy with *public virtue*, now is *your* time to indulge the *fonder passion*. If ever you felt for the ruin and disgrace of England, and for the *miseries and deprivations* occasioned by the obnoxious Reform Bill, you are called on, by the most tender and affectionate tie in nature, to exert *your* persuasive influence on the mind of a father, brother, husband, or lover: tell them not to seek filial duty, congenial regard, matrimonial comfort, nor *tender compliance*, till they have saved *your* country from *perdition* — *posterity* from *slavery*! History furnishes us with instances of *female patriotism* equal to any in the page of *war* and politics. O! may the generous and beatific charms of female persuasion prevail with the *citizens of Norwich*, to espouse the cause of real liberty—of

STORMONT AND SCARLETT

The Six Misses Montgomerie (daughters of the Earl of Eglinton) ask a boon of Lord Milton

THE Petition of the Six Vestal Virgins of Eglinton to the Honourable Lord Milton.

Humbly sheweth—that whereas your petitioners has taken upon them to solícite in behalf of Alexander Aickenhead, part of whose storie your Lordship knows already. His new misfortune is, that after he had received sentence of banishment for three years out of this regality, he was unhappily seduced by his principal

Whimsicalities

creditors to come privetly to his own house to compound some debts, but was not an hour there before the malicious neighbourhood inform'd against him, and had him unexpectedly apprehended and carried to Irvine gaol ; So we being importun'd by his wife (who is extremely handsome), join'd with our own inclinations to serve the poor man, we're in hopes that these two motives will have some ascendant over your lordship's natural disposition to relieve the distress'd ; and to excite you still further to this good action, his wife, as the only acceptable reward she thinks she can make for this piece of humanity she hopes from your lordship in favour of her husband's liberty, she protests you shall have as many kisses as you please to demand (and we likewise bind and oblige ourselves to do the same, when your lordship makes your publick entrie here in May) ; but we once more beg you'll use your interest to get the man out of prison, which you'll do a particular good to his family and an infinite obligation to your pupils, whose ambition's to subscribe themselves. — Your lordship's most affectionate children,

BETTIE MONTGOMERIE

ELEANOR MONTGOMERIE

SUSANNA MONTGOMERIE

MARY MONTGOMERIE

FRANCES MONTGOMERIE

CHRISTIAN MONTGOMERIE

P.S.—We'll esteem it a favour if your lordship will honour us with an answer. But for heaven's sake remember that the wife is hansom.

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A gentle lady puts a firm to the pain of selling her something ୨ ୨ ୨ ୨ ୨ ୨

GENTLEMEN,—Will you, of your kindness, pardon the liberty I take in venturing to trouble you with a small request, being a stranger to you. But my sister, Mrs. Avenell, lately residing at Bellevue, Medina Road, Brightburne, intimated to me that you would very likely be so good as not to object to my requesting a small favour from you, and I have ventured to ask in that belief. If, therefore, I am not presuming too much, might I ask the kind favour of a black velvet-spotted veil being sent to me? The pattern I venture to enclose is from a veil my sister sent me from your establishment, and it is so superior to those I obtain here, in softness and thickness of the spots, that I should much like another, as near to it as convenient. I think the one yard and a little more came to about one and sixpence. It is the soft quality which I like, combined with the close thick spots.

I will, if you are so good as to entertain my request, send postal order previously to the receipt of the parcel.

Awaiting your kind reply, with many apologies if I have troubled you inconveniently, Believe me to be, Gentlemen, Yours respectfully,

A true Protestant objects to "Wolsey" underwear ୨

January 8, 1908

DEAR SIRs,—I am sorry to return the Drawers, which are a trifle too small round the waist.

At the expense of being considered bigoted, to tell you the truth, I do not like the Brand, although the material is excellent in quality.

Whimsicalities

The man whose likeness appears, "WOLSEY," was one under whom poor Protestants *writhed*, and although you may say this is a small matter and of no importance, it indicates the Firm at least allowing such to go forth in these critical times is at least careless, if not genuine Roman Catholics, and a Feather will indicate which way the wind blows.

Again the buttons would be far better of linen instead of pearl. Please to send me others.—Believe me, Yours faithfully,

A belligerent changes his mind



DEAR SIR,—I write to tell you that I shall not take the remaining ten of my dozen boxing lessons with you. My reason for taking your course was, as I told you, because I have been promised a thrashing by Mr. — when he catches me. I have come to the conclusion that I would rather have his than yours. I cannot thank you for the pains you have taken, because I did all the taking, didn't I?—Yours,

A Chinese editor is under the painful necessity of refusing a contribution



ILLUSTRIOUS brother of the sun and moon—Behold thy servant prostrate before thy feet. I kowtow to thee and beg that of thy graciousness thou mayest grant that I may speak and live. Thy honoured manuscript has deigned to cast the light of its august countenance upon me. With raptures I have perused it. By the bones of my ancestors, never have I encountered such wit, such

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pathos, such lofty thought. With fear and trembling I return the writing. Were I to publish the treasure you sent me, the Emperor would order that it should be made the standard, and that none be published except such as equalled it. Knowing literature as I do, and that it would be impossible in ten thousand years to equal what you have done, I send your writing back. Ten thousand times I crave your pardon. Behold my head is at your feet. Do what you will.—Your servant's servant,

THE EDITOR

A great Victorian is beset by a poor artist ♪ ♪

August 9

MR. FRITH having given me ten shillings altogether, if he would give me half-sovereign it would make me proud. I would withdraw any request which might not meet Mr. Frith's intentions ; therefore, at the outside, would ask Mr. Frith to give me ten shillings, and I would not repeat any requests for twelve months, not asking Mr. Frith for money at a larger scale than one pound a year. A half-sovereign would purchase a good deal of bread for a short time. Insufficient supply of bread, and no butter, is what I complain of. Two great hungry boys and three girls. I am only desirous of getting the drawing and painting in motion, as may be seen from a note-book which I have in my pocket, which contains a pen-and-ink sketch of Her Majesty the Queen, that, carved with effect, would be a group of the royal family.

A long time back I inquired as to how I might get an interview with the Prince of Wales. I was told to write to Fisher the Secretary, but he was not in town. This

Whimsicalities






was three years back. I thought his royal highness might give me a regular income if he thought I was capable of holding the post of painter in ordinary. Such an office David Wilkie held. David Wilkie was a bachelor, and had no interruptions to his pursuits. I thought it not safe to have anything sent to me to the B—— post-office, because I suspected that it might be stolen—I am very suspicious. I think there is temptation to purloin when they think the party addressed is an easy person not likely to kick up a row. Some of these post-masters have known vicissitudes, and unless a man has the highest principles, could not resist the temptation. I had not pluck to call upon the people to ask them for money—not as yet. I pass and repass their houses without having pluck to call and ask for anything, caused partly by a rebuff I received from Mr. C. of B——, for he said, “Cut it short” (my message); and added in my hearing, not to me, but to the servant, “Tell him I have enough to do with my own people.”

If Mr. Frith sent me the money, would he please to put it in a cut card by registered letter? The reason I make the application is this : I dreamt that Mr. Frith, or some one, sent me that amount ; perhaps he would make the said dream come true.

Mr. Frith might take it into his head to send me one pound once in twelve months, either in four or two parts, or at once, I promising not to tease Mr. Frith until September 1870. Perhaps by that time my position might be considerably altered as regards pecuniary difficulties.

Perhaps this is the last note for twelve months at least I shall trouble you with. What's the good of wasting paper and one's time for nothing?—I am yours respectfully,

The Second Post

Mr. Henwood asks a variety of assistance of the Rev.
A. Blomfield     

10 BUTTER STREET, BETHNAL GREEN

February 2, 1866

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I regret to inform you that I am ill from grief, having grieved at your Departure, sustaining thereby a heavy loss, as you were a *kind*, and one of my *best* customers for wine, etc., you having taken of me *ever* since the early part '64, you having kindly given me a Testimonial respecting the Pale Sherry and Brandy dated April 1864. I shall be deeply grateful, nay I humbly *Pray* that you may be graciously pleased to listen to my cry, and grant my *Petition*, namely that you should kindly give me an order that I may live and not die, and a mine of gratitude, Dear Sir, shall be sprung, which *Death alone* can exhaust.

I pray that my necessity may be a sufficient apology for this Intrusion, and that my extremity may be God's opportunity, through your Instrumentality, and to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost all praise and glory shall redound. —I beg to remain, Yours faithfully till death, most humbly imploring a line,

C. W. HENWOOD

P.S.—I shall be happy to come and clean your windows for you outside for *nothing*, should you please, having done them for the Rev. J. Strickland M.A. of St. Jude's Whitechapel. I have also had the honour to serve with Brandy the Rev. Francis Blomfield M.A.




P.S.—Dear Sir, I am at present in a most wretched and Deplorable state of mind ; the Tempter as tempted me, life seems a blank to me. Oh if you could but

Whimsicalities

know how unhappy I am, I am sure you would pity and help me. I have struggled against adversity ; I ask an interest in your Prayers. Probably you may be able to give me an order for a gallon of Brandy.

(Written on the envelope)

DEAR SIR, whenever the word Beaujolais is mentioned I shall always think of you.

An old Irish farmer desires the custom of an honourable solvent butter-merchant   

I

PERMIT me to say that the butter produced from off of the fertile Lands and the Daisy Clad hillocks of this Romantic Parish and having it manufactured by the Lilly white hands of an Amiable Excellent Lady that it must be of Incomparable Excellence sufficient to give delectation to the Taste and Olfactory Nerve of the Honorable and Exquisite Epicures. Permit me to solicit your honor to Exhibit this test firkin of Butter in your Superb Establishment as a paragon of Taste and Pulcristude, proving itself to be far sweeter and more mellifluent than the Remarkable dews that fell in the days of Yore on the mountains of Sion.

II

HON^{BLE} SIR,—The many acts of dignified Generosity which have characterized your honor thro' life, the tender, Just, and Feeling disposition your Honor has Evinced thro' Life in all Communications addressed to

The Second Post

your Honor, and the Natural Tendency to promote and Effect the Goodness and Kindness which predominates Triumphantly in your honor's Noble, pure, and Exalted bosom, prompted me, a Venerable Ballyhildrum Farmer to address your Honor, hoping that my appeal will not be Frustrated but will meet with your Honor's approval and Kind Consideration.

III

HON^{BLE} SIR,—I Received your Honor's Kind, and Complimentary letter which has Excited my spirits, to an unlimited state of Ecstasy which I return your Honor my Sincere and unfeigned thanks for Giving your Honor's orders to the Clanmally Butter Factory at my request, for one firkin of Butter as a Test firkin, why your Honor it would delight the heart, and charm the eye of any person to see the daisy clad Hillocks and shamrock fields of this Romantic Parish. . . .

I am 81 years of age last August and out of pure Love, and Friendship for your Honor, please permit me to solicit your Honor—For my last Request, to Enclose your Honor's photograph, and the Photograph of your Honor's Amiable Lovely, and Excellent Lady, to me, I'll Treasure and Keep them hung up in my parlour as paragons of Beauty, and Loveliness.

And in Return I'll Wield my pen tho' old I am, bestowing deserving Eulogy on your Honor, And on your Honor's Amiable, Lovely and Excellent Lady.

IV

HON^{BLE} SIR,—I received your Honors and Hon^{ble} Lady's Photographs this morning, which I Return your Honor and Hon^{ble} Lady, my Sincere and

Whimsicalities

Unfeigned thanks for the favour and Honor bestowed on me, a favor and Honor, I'll appreciate thro' Life.

It's not the Photograph I admire tho' it being Beautiful Chaste, Exquisite, and Intrinsically Grand present of art and taste, and it Borrows all its Lustre and Value from the Hon^{ble} Feelings that called it forth, and the humane affectionate Regard and Respect, that accompanied the present, feelings I'll thro' Life cherish, and it puts a Greater Crown on the present and enhances it one hundred times more and more as an Humble Co. Cork Farmer to be Dignified with such an Hon^{ble} Exquisite Present.

First of all when I look at your Honor's Photograph it explicitly indicates to me, that your Honor is the Type of a Nobleman, having Alacrity depicted on your Honor's Countenance and Benevolence in your heart, and your honor is thro' Life Benefiscent and Charitable Condescending and humane, your honor is thro' Life 'a Noble, Illustrious, Magnanimous, and Philanthropic Nobleman, who is Loved and Beloved by all, Respected by the great and Noble of the Land, Your Honor being a Goodhearted, Kindhearted, Noblehearted unobtrusive Nobleman who have supported An Immaculate character Thro' Life.

Your Honor is a Nobleman, who is broad and clear of Views, decisive and Energetic of Action seeing at a Glance your Means and Ends, and Ignoring the Idea of failure, your Honor is courteous of demeanour, Charitable in word and work, Hon^{ble} and Equitable in all your dealings thro' life, as a beloved Husband, A Kind, fond, and Affectionate parent, a first class Butter, and Bacon Merchant, and a warmhearted Friend, why your Honor is a Model Man—your Honor is the Life and Soul of

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progress, you are a nobleman of Immense Business powers, and the Brilliancy of your Honor's mind and character, could only be compared to the (Sun) on his Evening declination when he Remits his Splendour, but Retains his Magnitude, and pleases more tho' he dazzles less, and the saying of the poet is Verified in your Honor that you are of the first flowers of the Earth, and first Gem of the Sea.

But your Honor do not Require my simple Eulogy to Enhance your Honor's merits or my Lowly and Unadorned Language to portray your Honor's Inestimable Qualifications.

Secondly, I have to Bestow a share of deserved Eulogy on the Hon^{ble} Lovely Lady Dixon, as follows :—

First of all, The Scripture says, that a good Wife is a good Fortune, And that houses, Lands, and Cash are Given by parents, but that a prudent, Lovely, Amiable, and Excellent Lady, is properly from the Lord. Such as the Lovely, Amiable Lady Dixon is, why to Look at her Ladyship's face, You'll see that Heaven has implanted something beyond this world, Something bearing Kindred with the Skys on her Ladyship, The Angelical appearance the Beautiful Golden Looking Hair, fine high Forehead, Smiling Countenance, Milk White Breast, and Stately deportment, that Providence and Nature have blessed her Ladyship with, And her Ruby Lips and Fragrant breath is far sweeter and more mellifluent than the Remarkable Dews that fell in the days of Yore, on the Mountains of Sion. I Congratulate your Honor, to be Allied in the Rosy path of Matrimony to such an Amiable, Lovely, and Excellent Lady, because in her Ladyship's Juvenile days she was in Beauty and Bloom by a true Comparison to be chosen by a King or to be a prince's companion and vincet veritas. Her

Whimsicalities

Ladyship is Young, tall, and straight, Neat and handsome, Supreme in Knowledge and Female Carriage, sweet odour flows from her head to her Ladyship's toes.

Her Ladyship is Nature's pride by the height of Morality, she being Endowed with Charity and Hospitality, Sweet odour flows from her Head to her Ladyship's toes. And Secondly her Ladyship is Nature's pride, and Nature, as if desirous that so bright a production of her Skill should shine forth, has bestowed on the Hon^{ble} Lady Dixon Bodily Accomplishments, Vigour of Limbs, Dignity of shape and Air, and a pleasing Engaging and Open Cheerful Countenance.

Hon^{ble} Sir, and Madam, please Excuse this long Extemporary Letter, Wishing may Providence diffuse his choicest Blessings on Your Honor, and Hon^{ble} Lady, And on Your Young Lovely Family, And may ye all be blessed with Length of days and Years in Good Health—Amen.

Hoping when Your Honor will Receive this Cherished Letter please don't allow it to go astray, But like the Polar Star above will shine in print in Your Honor's Lovely Parlour every day.—Believe me, Hon^{ble} Sir And Madam, With Profound Respect, Your Ob^t Servant,
Most Respectfully,

XIX

OLLA PODRIDA

Bishop Warburton preaches philosophy to the Rev.

Dr. Stukely



June 19, 1738

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I beg your acceptance of the inclosed. Our friend the Doctor told me he had the pleasure of seeing you. He told me, you rejected the lines he shewed you as impostures. I do not wonder at it. You know best whether the thing be possible. But the family is so far above all suspicion of fraud, or having any ends to serve by it, that nothing but an absolute impossibility could make me disbelieve it.


I hope you are easier in your domestics than you was ; that you have got servants that are honest, careful, and with a few brains. I very much wish to see you, and hope you will do me that pleasure at Broughton some time next month. However, do me the favour to let me know, that I may be at home ; for this summer time I have some short excursion or other that I am every post making, but none half so interesting to me as the seeing you. I hope the young ones are all well, and that Miss Fanny is grown woman enough now to make your coffee ; a happiness, some years ago, you used to flatter yourself with the hopes of living to see.

You see the burthen of my song is hope, hope, hope ;

Olla Podrida

and how much I am obliged to live upon it. But, that this may never fool you or me too long, I will tell you a story. Sir Francis Bacon was walking out one evening near the Thames, where he saw some fishermen ready to cast in their nets : he asked them what they would have for their draught ; they said, ten shillings ; he bade them five ; so, not agreeing, the fishermen threw in upon their own fortune, and took nothing. On this, Bacon seeing them look very blank, asked them why they were such blockheads as not to take his money? They answered, they had been toiling all day, and had taken nothing, and they were in *hopes* that their last cast would have made amends for all : on which he told them, they were unlucky dogs ; but that he would give them something to carry home with them ; and it was this maxim, which they should be sure never to forget, *That hope is a good breakfast, but a very bad supper.* So far for my story. But I do not know how it is ; but I should make but a bad meal of it, either at breakfast or supper. I should like it well enough for a kind of second course, as cheese to digest a good substantial dinner. And so the happy use it ; while the unhappy, like the poor, are forced to make an eternal meal upon it.—I am, dear friend, yours most affectionately,

W. WARBURTON

Dr. Andrew Brown (?) instils worldly wisdom into
Scotch physicians 

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for the present of your small Treatise about Vomiting in Fevers, but at the same time I approve of your reasons, you must give me leave to condemn your conduct : I know you begin to storm at this ; but have a little patience. There was

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a physician of this town, perhaps the most famous in his time, being called to his patient, complaining (it may be) of an oppression at his stomach ; he would very safely and cautiously order him a decoction of *carduus*, sometimes hot water ; I don't know but he would allow now and then fat mutton broth too. The patient was vomited, and the doctor could justify himself that he had not omitted that necessary evacuation ; this was his constant practice. Being chid by his colleagues, who well knew he neglected antimony, not out of ignorance or fear, he would roguishly tell them, " Come, come, gentlemen, that might cure my patient, but it would kill the distemper, and I should have less money in my pocket. A pretty business indeed, a rich citizen overgorges himself, which by management may be improved into a good substantial fever, worth at least twenty guineas ; and you would have me nip the plant in the bud, have a guinea for my pains, and lose the reputation of a safe practitioner to boot." The gentleman had reason, all trades must live. Alas ! our people here are grown too quick-sighted, they will have antimonial vomits, and a physician dares not omit them, tho' it is many a good fee out of his pocket. Join, I say, with these wise gentlemen ; they wish well to the Faculty ; procure an order of the Colledge, and banish antimony the city of Edinburgh, and the liberties thereof. 'Tis a barbarous thing in these hard times to strangle an infant distemper ; they ought no more to be murdered than young cattle in Lent. Let it be as great a crime to kill a fever with an antimonial vomit, as to fish in spawning time. The Dutch physicians are like the rest of their nation wise ; they banish that heathenish Jesuitical drug, that would quickly reduce their practice to a narrow compass in the hopefulest distemper of the countrey. These rogues that dream of nothing but specificks and

Olla Podrida

panaceas, I would have them all hang'd, not so much for the folly of the attempt, as the malice of their intention ; rascals, to starve so many worthy gentlemen, that perhaps know no otherwise to get their livelihood. Will the glasiers ever puzzle themselves to make glass malleable, would the knitters ever so much as have dreamed of a stocking-loom, or the young writers petition'd to have informations printed ; all those are wise in their generation, and must the physicians be the only fools ?

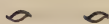
We all know here there is no danger in antimonial vomits, but this is *inter nos* ; you must not tell your patient so, let him believe, as I said before, that antimonial vomits are dangerous, deleterial, break the fibres of the stomach, etc., and that you cannot safely give them. So shall you be stiled a cautious, safe physician, one that won't spoil the curll of a man's hair to pull him out of the river. We have some dangerous dogs here, that in a quinsy, when a man is ready to be chock'd, will blood him forty ounces at once ; is not this extreamly hazardous ? They cut off limbs, cut for the stone ; is this safe ? I tell you the reputation of a wary safe physician is worth all the parts of his character besides. Now I hope you will allow I have reason for what I said.

I have seen the *Melius Inquirendum*, and am too well acquainted with the stile and spelling, not to know that it is Dr. Eyzat's ; but here I must be with you again, how come you to write against one that says two drams of emetick wine is a sufficient doze for a man ? Suffer not such things to come abroad ; they will imagine you are not got so far as the circulation of the blood in Scotland ; write seriously against such people. Fy upon't, I will never allow them to be above the dispensation of ballads and doggrel, etc.—I am, Sir, yours, etc.

LONDON, *August 23, 1699*

The Second Post

Lady Dufferin is whimsical on property



HAMPTON COURT, *October 22*

MY DEAR MISS BERRY,—I began a little note the other day to thank you for your kind remembrance of me and your coming so far to see me (which opportunity I was *very* sorry to have missed), but my note in the agitating agonies of packing up disappeared, and I had no strength of mind to begin another. My mother and I have returned to this place for a few days, in order to make an ineffectual grasp at any remaining property that we may have in the world. Of course you have heard that we were robbed and murdered the other night by a certain soft-spoken cook, who headed a storming party of banditti through my mother's kitchen window; if not, you will see the full, true, and dreadful particulars in the papers, as we are to be "had up" at the Old Bailey on Monday next for the trial. We have seen a great deal of life, and learnt a great deal of the criminal law of England this week,—knowledge cheaply purchased at the cost of all my wardrobe and all my mother's plate. We have gone through two examinations in court: they were very hurrying and agitating affairs, and I had to kiss either the Bible or the magistrate—I don't recollect which, but *it* smelt of thumbs. The magistrates seemed to take less interest in my clothes than in my mother's spoons;—I suppose from some secret *affinity* or *congeniality* which they were conscious of. "*Similis gaudet*"—something—(I have lost my Latin with the rest of my property). When I say "*similis*," I don't so much allude to the purity of the metal as to its particular form.







I find that the idea of personal property is a fascinating illusion, for our goods belong in fact to our country, and not to us; and that the petticoats and stockings which I

Olla Podrida

have fondly imagined mine, are really the petticoats of Great Britain and Ireland. I am now and then indulged with a distant glimpse of my most necessary garments in the hands of different policemen ; but "in this stage of the proceedings" may do no more than wistfully recognise them. Even on such occasions, the words of justice are, "Policeman B 25, produce *your* gowns ;" "Letter A 36, identify *your* lace ;" "Letter C, tie up *your* stockings." All this is harrowing to the feelings ; but one cannot have everything in this life ; we have obtained justice and can easily wait for a change of linen. Hopes are held out to us that at some vague period in the lapse of time we may be allowed a *wear* out of our raiment—at least, so much of it as may have resisted the wear and tear of justice ; and my poor mother looks confidently forward to being restored to the bosom of her silver teapot. But I don't know ; I begin to look upon all property with a philosophic eye as unstable in its nature and liable to all sorts of pawnbrokers. Moreover, the police and I have so long had my clothes in common, that I shall never feel at home in them again. To a virtuous mind the idea that Inspector Dowsett examined into all one's hooks and eyes, tapes and buttons, etc., is inexpressibly painful. But I cannot pursue that view of the subject. Let me hope, dear Miss Berry, that you feel for us as we really deserve, and that you wish me well "thro' my clothes," on Monday next. . . . Yours very truly,

HELEN A. DUFFERIN

The Second Post

Canon Ainger sends a Christmas hamper of good
stories      

(To Mrs. Horace Smith)

MASTER'S HOUSE, TEMPLE, E.C.
Christmas 1898

MY DEAR FRIEND,—“As the Festive Season again recurs, I have to solicit a renewal of that friendly confidence, which it will ever be my study to deserve. I hope to be able to supply you with some fine Chestnuts for the Christmas dinner, of which samples are enclosed. Joe Millers are cheap to-day.”—I quote from my favourite grocer. Lily—that “plant and flower of light” (Ben Jonson) sends me a very gratifying account of you all, especially of Edward, who I understand is shortly to take Holy Orders. If he would wish me to sign his “Si quis,” I shall be happy to do so—and hope he will not think I am “Si-quizzing” him. . . .

I heard a story lately of a Butler.

Party in a Country House. Maid dressing a guest's hair. *Guest*: “I hope, Parker, you are comfortable in your place.” “Oh yes, Ma'am—the society downstairs is so superior. The Butler leads the conversation. He is such a refined man—indeed, quite scientific. He has been telling us all about Evolution, and we quite understand it now. He says we are all descended from Darwin.”

By the way, did you hear of Mrs. Creighton (wife of the Bishop of London) addressing a great Mothers' Meeting at the East End of London on how to make home attractive and comfortable and so on. *Old Lady* at the conclusion to another old Lady, “Ah! it's all very well—but I should like to know what Mrs. Creighton does when old Mr. Creighton *comes home drunk*.”

Olla Podrida

And this by a natural association of ideas reminds me of an epigram just sent me from Bristol. At Clevedon (where William and I once sat and smoked under the Church wall) there is a very High Church clergyman named Vicars Foote, who has been lately reprimanded by his Bishop for excessive Ritual. A flippant person puts into the offending parson's mouth the following retort,

"I will not leave my benefice,
Nor change the ways I've got.
A Bishop's foot may be put down,
A *Vicar's Foot* may not!"

I wonder if another Theological story has reached Sheffield yet—about the old Scotch lady who heard that in the Revised Version of the Lord's Prayer, the Revisers had substituted "Deliver us from the evil one" for "Deliver us from evil"—(as they *have* done, you know). The old lady replied, "Eh, Sirs—but he'll be sair uplifted!"

I have been in Scotland this year, and in Ireland, but I think most of the good stories have been told. By the way, if you want some good *old* stories, get ——'s recently published volume of Rummy-nuisances (this is my witty way of spelling it). I have suggested (not to *him*) as a motto for the next Edition—

Under the Chestnut Tree
Who loves to lie with me?

As we are on the subject of the clergy, have you ever heard *this*? Scotch Minister returning to his Manse in the gloaming, becomes aware of a figure sleeping sweetly in a ditch. On further examination, he discovers one of his own Elders. After dragging him up and restoring his suspended animation, he asks, with some indignation, where his Church Officer had been. "Well, Minister, I canna weel remember whether it was a wedding or a Funeral—but it was a *gran' success*!" It must have

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been the same gentleman (or one of the same pattern) who at a dinner party, after drinking champagne during the earlier courses, was heard to murmur: "I hope there's some whisky coming! I get vera tired of these *mineral waters!*"

And now that you, like this gentleman, are getting "vera tired" of so much prose—and that, *not* sparkling—what say you to dropping into poetry like Mr. Wegg?

"There was an old man of Bengal
Who purchased a Bat and a Ball
Some gloves, and some pads—
(It was one of his fads—
For he never played cricket at all!)."

. . . Well, I fear you and yours will have to mourn over me that years do not seem to "bring the philosophic mind," and that your poor friend is just as frivolous as he was thirty years ago. Well, well, it's Christmas time, and a few Crackers (besides *Tom Smith's*) may be allowed upon the dinner table, among the plainer and more wholesome viands. And so I trust to be forgiven, and to be thought kindly of by my dear old friends at the "Westwood Arms," for that is *still* its name to me, knowing that they are always open to receive their attached and faithful friend,

A. A.

R. L. S. has an adventure, and speculates on the
Elgin marbles ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

(To Mrs. Sitwell, now Mrs. Sidney Colvin)

April 1875

HERE is my long story: yesterday night, after having supped, I grew so restless that I was obliged to go out in search of some excitement. There was a half-moon lying over on its back, and incredibly bright in the

Olla Podrida

midst of a faint grey sky set with faint stars : a very inartistic moon, that would have damned a picture.

At the most populous place of the city I found a little boy, three years old perhaps, half frantic with terror, and crying to every one for his " Mammy." This was about eleven, mark you. People stopped and spoke to him, and then went on, leaving him more frightened than before. But I and a good-humoured mechanic came up together ; and I instantly developed a latent faculty for setting the hearts of children at rest. Master Tommy Murphy (such was his name) soon stopped crying, and allowed me to take him up and carry him ; and the mechanic and I trudged away along Princes Street to find his parents. I was soon so tired that I had to ask the mechanic to carry the bairn ; and you should have seen the puzzled contempt with which he looked at me, for knocking in so soon. He was a good fellow, however, although very impracticable and sentimental ; and he soon bethought him that Master Murphy might catch cold after his excitement, so we wrapped him up in my greatcoat. " Tobauga (Tobago) Street " was the address he gave us ; and we deposited him in a little grocer's shop and went through all the houses in the street without being able to find any one of the name of Murphy. Then I set off to the head police office, leaving my greatcoat in pawn about Master Murphy's person. As I went down one of the lowest streets in the town, I saw a little bit of life that struck me. It was now half-past twelve, a little shop stood still half-open, and a boy of four or five years old was walking up and down before it imitating cockcrow. He was the only living creature within sight.

At the police offices no word of Master Murphy's parents ; so I went back empty-handed. The good groceress, who had kept her shop open all this time,

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could keep the child no longer ; her father, bad with bronchitis, said he must forth. So I got a large scone with currants in it, wrapped my coat about Tommy, got him up on my arm, and away to the police office with him : not very easy in my mind, for the poor child, young as he was—he could scarce speak—was full of terror for the “office,” as he called it. He was now very grave and quiet and communicative with me ; told me how his father thrashed him, and divers household matters. Whenever he saw a woman on our way he looked after her over my shoulder and then gave his judgment : “That’s no *her*,” adding sometimes, “She has a wean wi’ her.” Meantime I was telling him how I was going to take him to a gentleman who would find out his mother for him quicker than ever I could, and how he must not be afraid of him, but be brave, as he had been with me. We had just arrived at our destination—we were just under the lamp—when he looked me in the face and said appealingly, “He’ll no put me in the office?” And I had to assure him that he would not, even as I pushed open the door and took him in.

The serjeant was very nice, and I got Tommy comfortably seated on a bench, and spirited him up with good words and the scone with the currants in it ; and then, telling him I was just going out to look for Mammy, I got my greatcoat and slipped away.

Poor little boy ! he was not called for, I learn, until ten this morning. This is very ill-written, and I’ve missed half that was picturesque in it ; but to say truth, I am very tired and sleepy : it was two before I got to bed. However, you see, I had my excitement.

Monday.—I have written nothing all morning ; I cannot settle to it. Yes—I *will* though.

Olla Podrida

10.45.—And I did. I want to say something more to you about the three women. I wonder so much why they should have been *women*, and halt between two opinions in the matter. Sometimes I think it is because they were made by a man for men ; sometimes, again, I think there is an abstract reason for it, and there is something more substantive about a woman than ever there can be about a man. I can conceive a great mythical woman, living alone among inaccessible mountain-tops or in some lost island in the pagan seas, and ask no more. Whereas if I hear of a Hercules, I ask after Iole or Dejanira. I cannot think him a man without women. But I can think of these three deep-breasted women, living out all their days on remote hill-tops, seeing the white dawn and the purple even, and the world outspread before them for ever, and no more to them for ever than a sight of the eyes, a hearing of the ears, a far-away interest of the inflexible heart, not pausing, not pitying, but austere with a holy austerity, rigid with a calm and passionless rigidity ; and I find them none the less women to the end.

And think, if one could love a woman like that once, see her once grow pale with passion, and once wring your lips out upon hers, would it not be a small thing to die? Not that there is not a passion of a quite other sort, much less epic, far more dramatic and intimate, that comes out of the very frailty of perishable *women* ; out of the lines of suffering that we see written about their eyes, and that we may wipe out if it were but for a moment ; out of the thin hands, wrought and tempered in agony to a fineness of perception, that the indifferent or the merely happy cannot know ; out of the tragedy that lies about such a love, and the pathetic incompleteness. This is another thing, and perhaps it is a higher

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I look over my shoulder at the three great headless Madonnas, and they look back at me and do not move ; see me, and through and over me, the foul life of the city dying to its embers already as the night draws on ; and over miles and miles of silent country, set here and there with lit towns, thundered through here and there with night expresses scattering fire and smoke ; and away to the ends of the earth, and the furthest star, and the blank regions of nothing ; and they are not moved. My quiet, great-kneed, deep-breasted, well-draped ladies of Necessity, I give my heart to you !

R. L. S.

R. L. S. attends a performance of the *Demi-Monde*
by Dumas fils ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪

(To William Archer)




Saranac Spring, 188—(?)

MY DEAR ARCHER,—It happened thus. I came forth from that performance in a breathing heat of indignation. (Mind, at this distance of time and with my increased knowledge, I admit there is a problem in the piece ; but I saw none then, except a problem in brutality ; and I still consider the problem in that case not established.) On my way down the *Français* stairs, I trod on an old gentleman's toes, whereupon with that suavity that so well becomes me, I turned about to apologise, and on the instant, repenting me of that intention, stopped the apology midway, and added something in French to this effect : No, you are one of the *lâches* who have been applauding that piece. I retract my apology. Said the old Frenchman, laying his hand on my arm

Olla Podrida

and with a smile that was truly heavenly in temperance, irony, good nature, and knowledge of the world, "Ah, monsieur, vous êtes bien jeune!"—Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

R. L. S. loses a friend     

(To W. E. Henley)

September 19, 1883

DEAR BOY,—Our letters vigorously cross : you will ere this have received a note to Coggie : God knows what was in it.

It is strange, a little before the first word you sent me—so late—kindly late, I know and feel—I was thinking in my bed, when I knew you I had six friends—Bob I had by nature ; then came the good James Walter—with all his failings—the *gentleman* of the lot, alas to sink so low, alas to do so little, but now, thank God, in his quiet rest ; next I found Baxter—well do I remember telling Walter I had unearthed "a W.S. that I thought would do"—it was in the Academy Lane, and he questioned me as to the Signet's qualifications ; fourth came Simpson ; somewhere about the same time, I began to get intimate with Jenkin ; last came Colvin. Then, one black winter afternoon, long Leslie Stephen, in his velvet jacket, met me in the *Spec.* by appointment, took me over to the infirmary, and in the crackling, blighting gaslight showed me that old head whose excellent representation I see before me in this photograph. Now when a man has six friends, to introduce a seventh is usually hopeless. Yet when you were

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presented, you took to them and they to you upon the nail. You must have been a fine fellow ; but what a singular fortune I must have had in my six friends that you should take to all. I don't know if it is good Latin, most probably not : but this is enscrolled before my eyes for Walter : *Tandem e nubibus in apricum properat*. Rest, I suppose, I know, was all that remained ; but O to look back, to remember all the mirth, all the kindness, all the humorous limitations and loved defects of that character ; to think that he was young with me, sharing that weather-beaten, Fergusonian youth, looking forward through the clouds to the sun-burst ; and now clean gone from my path, silent—well, well. This has been a strange awakening. Last night, when I was alone in the house, with the window open on the lovely still night, I could have sworn he was in the room with me ; I could show you the spot ; and, what was very curious, I heard his rich laughter, a thing I had not called to mind for I know not how long.

I see his coral waistcoat studs that he wore the first time he dined in my house ; I see his attitude, leaning back a little, already with something of a portly air, and laughing internally. How I admired him ! And now in the West Kirk.

I am trying to write out this haunting bodily sense of absence ; besides, what else should I write of ?

Yes, looking back, I think of him as one who was good, though sometimes clouded. He was the only gentle one of all my friends, save perhaps the other Walter. And he was certainly the only modest man among the lot. He never gave himself away ; he kept back his secret ; there was always a gentle problem behind all. Dear, dear, what a wreck ; and yet how pleasant is the retrospect ! God doeth all things well,

Olla Podrida

though by what strange, solemn, and murderous contrivances.

It is strange : he was the only man I ever loved who did not habitually interrupt. The fact draws my own portrait. And it is one of the many reasons why I count myself honoured by his friendship. A man like you *had* to like me ; you could not help yourself ; but Ferrier was above me, we were not equals ; his true self humoured and smiled paternally upon my failings, even as I humoured and sorrowed over his.

Well, first his mother, then himself, they are gone : "in their resting graves."

When I come to think of it, I do not know what I said to his sister, and I fear to try again. Could you send her this ? There is too much about yourself and me in it ; but that, if you do not mind, is but a mark of sincerity. It would let her know how entirely in the mind of (I suppose) his oldest friend, the good, true Ferrier obliterates the memory of the other, who was only his "lunatic brother."

Judge of this for me, and do as you please ; anyway, I will try to write to her again ; my last was some kind of scrawl that I could not see for crying. This came upon me, remember, with terrible suddenness ; I was surprised by this death ; and it is fifteen or sixteen years since first I saw the handsome face in the *Spec.* I made sure, besides, to have died first. Love to you, your wife, and her sisters.—Ever yours, dear boy,

R. L. S

I never knew any man so superior to himself as poor James Walter. The best of him only came as a vision, like Corsica from the Corniche. He never gave his measure either morally or intellectually. The curse

The Second Post

was on him. Even his friends did not know him but by fits. I have passed hours with him when he was so wise, good, and sweet, that I never knew the like of it in any other. And for a beautiful good humour he had no match. I remember breaking in upon him once with a whole red-hot story (in my worst manner), pouring words upon him by the hour about some truck not worth an egg that had befallen me; and suddenly, some half hour after, finding that the sweet fellow had some concern of his own of infinitely greater import, that he was patiently and smilingly waiting to consult me on. It sounds nothing; but the courtesy and the unselfishness were perfect. It makes me rage to think how few knew him, and how many had the chance to sneer at their better.

Well, he was not wasted, that we know; though if anything looked liker irony than this fitting of a man out with these rich qualities and faculties to be wrecked and aborted from the very stocks, I do not know the name of it. Yet we see that he has left an influence; the memory of patient courtesy has often checked me in rudeness; has it not you?

You can form no idea of how handsome Walter was. At twenty he was splendid to see; then, too, he had the sense of power in him, and great hopes; he looked forward, ever jesting of course, but he looked to see himself where he had the right to expect. He believed in himself profoundly; but *he never disbelieved in others*. To the roughest Highland student he always had his fine, kind, open dignity of manner; and a good word behind his back.

The last time that I saw him before leaving for America—it was a sad blow to both of us. When he heard I was leaving, and that might be the last time

Olla Podrida

we might meet—it almost was so—he was terribly upset, and came round at once. We sat late, in Baxter's empty house, where I was sleeping. My dear friend Walter Ferrier: O if I had only written to him more! if only one of us in these last days had been well! But I ever cherished the honour of his friendship, and now when he is gone, I know what I have lost still better. We live on, meaning to meet; but when the hope is gone, the pang comes.

R. L. S.

Lieutenant-Commander Sakuma Tsutomu, of the Japanese navy, describes the sinking of his submarine¹ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

May 19, 1910

ALTHOUGH there is, indeed, no excuse to make for the sinking of his Imperial Majesty's boat and for the doing away of subordinates through my heedlessness, all on the boat have discharged their duties well, and in everything acted calmly until death. Although we are departing in pursuance of our duty to the State, the only regret we have is due to anxiety lest the men of the world may misunderstand the matter, and that thereby a blow may be given to the future development of submarines. Gentlemen, we hope you will be increasingly diligent without misunderstanding [the cause of this accident], and that you will devote your full strength to investigate everything, and so ensure the future development of submarines. If this is done, we shall have nothing to regret.

While going through gasoline submarine exercise we submerged too far, and, when we attempted to shut the sluice valve, the chain in the meantime gave way. Then

¹ From a translation in the "Standard."

The Second Post

we tried to close the sluice valve by hand, but it was then too late, the rear part being full of water, and the boat sank at an angle of about 25 degrees.

1. The boat rested at an incline of about 13 degrees, pointing towards the stern.

2. The switchboard being under water, the electric lights gave out. Offensive gas developed, and respiration became difficult.

At about 10 a.m. on the 15th the boat sank, and under this offensive gas we endeavoured to expel the water with a hand pump.

At the same time as the vessel was being submerged, we expelled the water from the main tank. The light having gone out the gauge cannot be seen, but we know that the water has been expelled from the main tank. We cannot use the electric current entirely. The electric liquid is overflowing, but no salt water has entered, and chlorine gas has not developed. We only rely upon the hand pump now.

The above has been written under the light of the conning tower, when it was 11.45 o'clock. We are now soaked by the water that has made its way in. Our clothes are very wet and we feel cold.

I had always been used to warn my shipmates that their behaviour (on an emergency) should be calm and delicate while brave, otherwise we could not hope for development and progress, and that, at the same time, one should not cultivate excessive delicacy, lest work should be retarded. People may be tempted to ridicule this after this failure, but I am perfectly confident that my previous words have not been mistaken.

The depth gauge of the conning tower indicates 52, and, despite the endeavour to expel the water, the pump stopped and did not work after twelve o'clock.

Olla Podrida

The depth in this neighbourhood being ten fathoms, the reading may be correct.

The officers and men of submarines must be appointed from the most distinguished among the distinguished, or there will be annoyance in cases like this. Happily all the members of this crew have discharged their duties well, and I feel satisfied.

I have always expected death whenever I left my home, and therefore my will is already in the drawer at Karasaki. (This remark refers only to my private affairs, and it is not necessary. Messrs. Taguchi and Asami, please inform my father of this.)

I beg respectfully to say to his Majesty that I respectfully request that none of the families left by my subordinates shall suffer. The only matter I am anxious about now is this.

Please convey my compliments to the following gentlemen (the order may not be proper):—Minister Saito, Vice-Admiral Shimamura, Vice-Admiral Fujii, Rear-Admiral Nawa, Rear-Admiral Yamashita, Rear-Admiral Narita. (Atmospheric pressure is increasing, and I feel as if my tympanum were breaking.) Captain Oguri, Captain Ide, Commander Matsumura (Junichi), Captain Matsumura (Riu), Commander Matsumura (Kiku), my elder brother, Captain Funakoshi, Instructor Narita Kotaro, Instructor Ikuta Kokinji.

12.30 o'clock, respiration is extraordinarily difficult.

I mean I am breathing gasoline. I am intoxicated with gasoline.

Captain Nakano.¹

It is 12.40 o'clock.

¹ This is the name of another officer to whom the dying officer desired to be remembered.

The Second Post

Abraham Lincoln comforts a mother



EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON

November 21, 1864

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts.

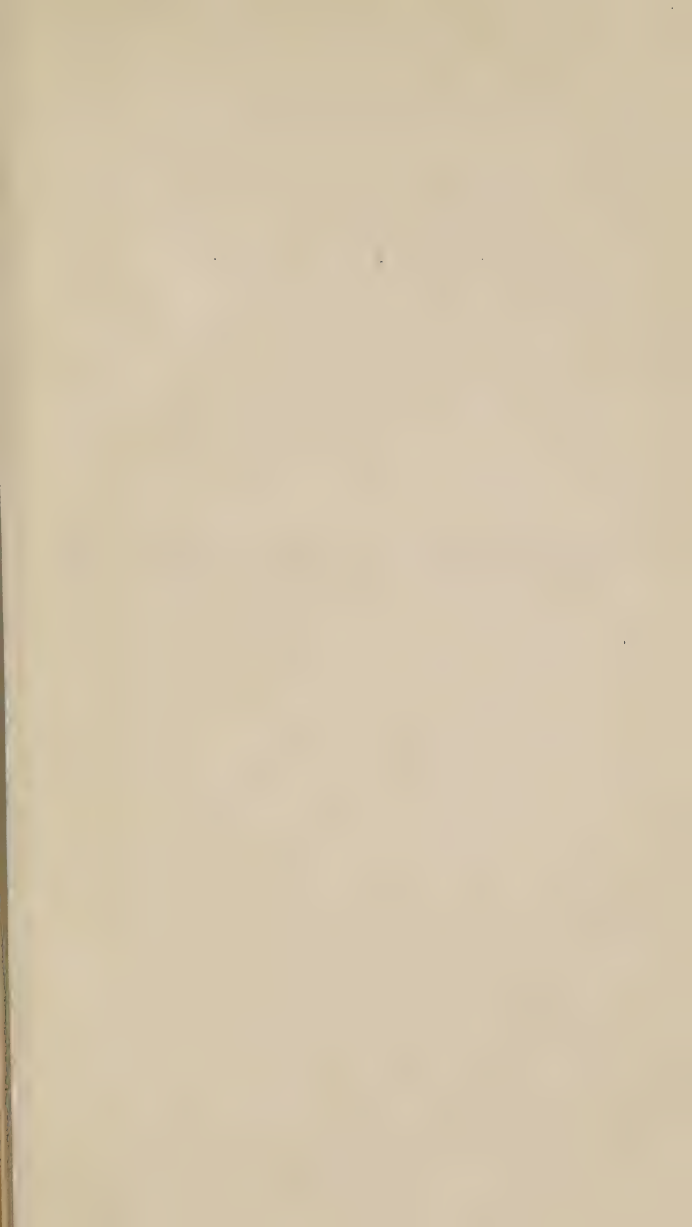
DEAR MADAM,—I have been shown in the files of the War Department, a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from your grief for a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.—Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"As life runs on the road grows strange,
With faces new,—and near the end
The milestones into headstones change :—
'Neath every one a friend."

J. R. LOWELL

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